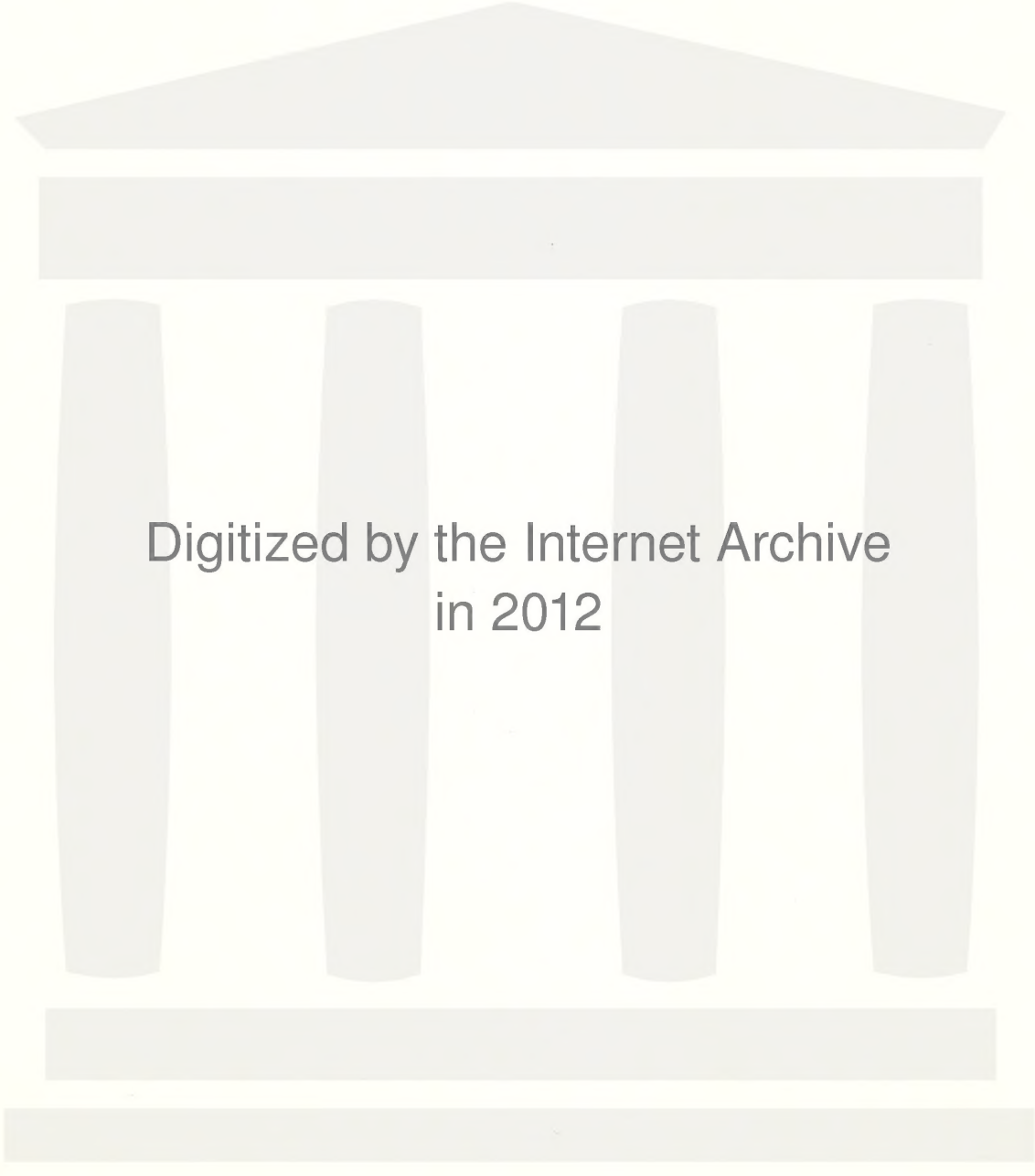
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HISTORY

OF THE

One Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Regiment,

N. Y. S. V.

BY

CHARLES H. WEYGANT.

NEWBURGH, N. Y.:
JOURNAL PRINTING HOUSE.
1877.

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TO THE

MEMORY

OF THE

GALLANT SOLDIERS

OF THE

4th REGIMENT, N. Y. S. VOLUNTEERS,

WHO DIED

IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY.

THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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HISTORY

OF THE

124TH NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS.

INTRODUCTION.

DURING the month of June, 1865, the writer had the honor of conducting from the field and disbanding at Washington's Head-quarters in Newburgh, a little band of battle-scarred veterans, the remnant of as brave and noble a regiment as the late war produced.

When the mighty work, to assist in which they had, nearly three years before entered the service of their country, had finally been accomplished; after the Great Rebellion had been crushed out, and the vile institution of slavery out of which it had grown had been effectually destroyed; and the anxiously-looked-for word came out from the National Capital, near which they were encamped, to these sons of Orange County, that their reunited country had no further need of their services—a long, glad shout went up from every throat, so loud and strong it seemed to shake the very ground on which they stood.

And then there came an almost universal wish—which grew daily stronger as the intervening time went slowly by—to be mustered out at Newburgh, where the bulk of Washington's Continental army had been disbanded—on the very hill-side where the honored ancestors of not a few of them had, nearly a century before, after the successful ending of their seven years' struggle for the independence of their country, assembled to listen to the reading of the Farewell Address of their loved chief.

And when at length the time for their final separation had arrived, and they stood drawn up in column for the last time as an organized body of Union soldiers, on ground made sacred by the foot-prints of the Father of their Country and of so many of that noble band of patriots who fought so long and hard to establish the glorious Union, for the preservation of which they had sacrificed, suffered, and accomplished so much—listening, with the vast multitude which had assembled to do them honor, to a most patriotic speech of welcome filled with words of general praise—a man in the ranks was heard to whisper, "That's good, that's good; but I wish he could tell to some of these weeping ones who have been following us all along the line of march through the city—wistfully scanning our faces as if searching for some one they must know can't be with us—how nobly their loved ones fought, and just when and where they fell, and how they died."

This thought, whispered by one, was undoubtedly the earnest wish of all. And when the writer came to shake hands and bid adieu to one after another of these men with whom he had for three long eventful years been so closely associated, he promised over and over again, that if his life were spared he would see to it that a history of the regiment was written, in which not only the sufferings and deeds of its noble dead, but of its surviving members, should be duly and truthfully recorded.

Ten years since then have passed away, and no able and experienced hand having been found willing to undertake a work requiring so much time and labor—which being necessarily of but local interest, promises but small remuneration—the task seems to have settled down on him who promised so faithfully to see the good work done.

It has not, however, been undertaken without many misgivings as to his ability to do simple justice to so good a subject.

The work will undoubtedly contain many defects, directly traceable to the author's inexperience, and consequent lack of ability as a writer.

Having thus at the outset called attention to what he concedes to be his weak points, it will perhaps be well for the

encouragement of the reader to state, that he professes to be strong not only in quality and quantity of material on hand, but in a personal knowledge of the facts with which he deals.

He had been connected with the regiment from its organization, and had witnessed the patient endurance and gallant deeds of its members throughout many a long and dreary march, and on more than a score of battle-fields; had been with them at Chancellorsville that dark day on which two-fifths of the regiment were either killed or wounded, and at Gettysburgh, where, after their first and ablest commander had fallen to rise no more, their Lieutenant-Colonel had been carried wounded from their sight, and their loved Major lay lifeless at their feet, it had been his privilege and duty to conduct them through the remaining scenes, in which they played a part, of that great battle.

Had seen their valor tested in the gloomy Wilderness, where, at the opening of the second day's fight, their second commander, in the last of his many battles, was wounded almost unto death; and his again became the duty to assume command.

Had led them through that and the following battles up to and over the rebel works in the famous charge of Spottsylvania, where, though again the ground over which they passed was left almost covered with their dead and wounded, the survivors pressed on until they had captured a battery of rebel guns and taken twice their number in prisoners from the foe, whose flag they trailed beneath their own; and had been their commander in all that long series of movements, skirmishes, and battles about Petersburg, which began July 4, 1864, and ended in the surrender of the great rebel chief, with the famous army of Northern Virginia, at Appomattox Court-house, on the 9th of June, 1865—only three days before which, in the last grand effort of Lee's hourly wasting force to beat back Grant's advance, they added the last twenty honored names to their long list of killed and wounded on the field of battle.

The majority of regimental histories which have come under the notice of the writer, have been written by non-combatants, whose points of observation have invariably been fixed beyond

the range of shot and shell—sometimes within sight of the smoke of battle, but not unfrequently out of hearing of the largest guns.

This work, on the contrary, is written by one who "has been himself a part of what he tells," and from a stand-point which is seldom removed out of sight of the regimental colors, and is not unfrequently fixed under the smoke, amid the iron and leaden hail and fire and heat of battle.

It is the purpose of the writer to show just where each man was, and what he did and suffered, in every general engagement, and to enable the reader to trace every individual member from the time he joins the regiment until he leaves it again, or the organization is dissolved.

It is not claimed that every noble and ignoble deed of every man was seen and noted, but there will be found in the recorded career of nearly every one some special personal act or experience which stands out in bold relief and marks his individuality.

CHAS. H. WEYGANT.

NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, July 30, 1875.

CHAPTER I.

ORGANIZATION—COMPOSITION.

OUR great civil war had been raging for over a year. The victorious rebel armies, having just hurled Banks' corps from the Shenandoah, and driven McClellan with his grand army from the Peninsula, were threatening an invasion of the North.

The people of the South, mad with joy over the success which had thus far attended their unholy undertaking, and firmly believing the Union had already been wounded beyond hope of recovery, were holding high carnival throughout the length and breadth of the Confederacy.

At the North, the patriotic enthusiasm which for months after the war began had so animated the people that volunteers rushed to the front faster than the Government could arm and equip them, had at length, by reason of the long series of terrible sanguinary disasters which had befallen the Union arms, given way to a spirit of gloomy depression.

Thousands of loyal hearts were beginning to experience a profound distrust of the Government in the conduct of the war. Copperheads and traitors who had hitherto found it unsafe to give utterance to their treasonable thoughts, save in secret conclaves, were permitted to shout aloud their joy over news of Confederate victories, and to laugh and scoff at their country's agony, in public places. Lovers of liberty all over the land were looking forward with painful forebodings of greater evils yet to come, and not a few, in whom hope had been stifled by despair, believed the hour of dissolution was close at hand, and expected soon to hear sounded the death-knell of the Union.

Five hundred thousand sons of the North had already taken the field, and six hundred million dollars had been expended to

crush the hydra, treason. Battle after battle had been fought, and the life-blood of thousands upon thousands of the best and bravest had moistened the soil of Southern fields; and yet, to the oft-repeated question, What has been accomplished? there came but this one answer—nothing, Virtually nothing.

The territorial limits of the Confederacy, it is true, had been somewhat reduced; but the spirit of secession was more rampant, and the rebellion presented a bolder front than ever.

At this critical period, and under these depressing circumstances, eighteen loyal governors united in a letter to the President, beseeching him without delay to make through them an urgent appeal to the waning patriotism of the people for yet another mighty army of Volunteers; and the good Lincoln—at last fully aware of the magnitude and real intent of the rebellion, and alarmed for the safety of the nation—forthwith issued, in response to this letter, his call for three hundred thousand *three years'* men.

The President's call was dated July 1, 1862, and on the following day Governor Morgan made his famous touching appeal to "each citizen" of the State of New York. But for a time the people turned a deaf ear to the call of their President and the cry of their Governor, or answered only by asking the question, What has the vast outlay of blood and treasure, already made, accomplished?

The work of preparation, nevertheless, on the part of the State authorities, was pushed forward with the utmost despatch, and Governor Morgan ceased not, day or night, in his efforts to re-arouse his people. The State was divided into military districts, in each of which a place of rendezvous was designated, and a committee of loyal and influential citizens appointed to superintend the work of enlistment, and to select and recommend suitable persons to command the regiments to be raised. Special appeals were made to nearly every town and county board, and circulars of instruction were sent broadcast over the State.

The military committee appointed by his excellency for the district comprising the counties of Orange and Sullivan, was composed of the following named gentlemen:

Hon. Robert Denniston, of Blooming Grove.
Hon. Ambrose S. Murray, of Goshen.
Hugh S. Bull, Esq., of Montgomery.
Alexander Moore, Esq., of Washingtonville.
Alfred Post, Esq., of Newburgh.
James M. Barrett, Esq., of Cornwall.
Morgan Shuit, Esq., of Monroe

On the 11th of July this committee held its first regular meeting at the United States Hotel in Newburgh, at which they wisely decided to recommend Captain A. Van Horne Ellis, of New Windsor, for the colonelcy of a regiment it was proposed to attempt to raise in the county of Orange.

Captain Ellis was then in the service. His company—composed principally of men from Newburgh, who had served under him in the 71st New York State Militia at Bull Run—had, a few weeks before, been called together at less than twenty-four hours' notice, for a second term of active service, and were then stationed in the fortifications near Washington. A kind of *active service* for which their immediate commander had not the slightest relish.

The captain was at the time temporarily home on business, and, on being notified of the action of the committee, promptly signified his willingness to accept the proffered position, and within an hour thereafter had telegraphed his resignation as captain to the commander of his regiment, at Washington, and was on his way to Albany for instructions and the necessary credentials. Arriving at the State House he found every door wide open, and kindred spirits there to receive him; and, untrammelled by the red tape which in former and after years would have delayed him, he was enabled, ten minutes after he stepped in the main entrance, to walk out again fully equipped for the work he had on hand. And that same evening he was not only at, but hard at work in his new field of action.

At five o'clock the following morning—for men in those days retired late, slept but little, and rose early—the writer was met by him in the street with, "Ah, ha, old fellow, you are just the man I'm looking for; if there is any fight left in you—and I

think there is—lend us a hand, 'lend us a hand,' and raise us a company."

It was understood by all that there was stern work ahead; and that Ellis' was to be a fighting regiment.

Said the "Newburgh Journal" of the time, and truthfully: "Colonel Ellis is a man who believes the soldier's business is to do as much damage to the enemy as possible; and those who enlist under him may expect to be taken into active service, and not left to vegetate in the useful, but inglorious work of guarding posts remote from the scene of danger."

A letter from a member of his old company, written to the Editor of the "Newburgh Telegraph," just after word had reached them of their captain's selection for a larger command, says: "We all concur in saying that the military committee . . . . could not have chosen a better man—a braver or more efficient officer, as commander of the new regiment from Orange County, than Colonel A. Van Horne Ellis. . . . One thing we feel assured of, he will never disgrace himself, or those under him, by a mean or cowardly act."

Said the Colonel to those whom he asked to assist him: "I want, for subordinate officers, men who will not only be able in pushing forward the organization, but most likely to render efficient services at the front—for those who follow me to the field may rest assured they will never, if I can prevent it, have reason to complain of being kept in the rear. A regiment of men is one thing. A regiment of *fighting* men is another thing. The country needs, and I want, the latter." From the very start Colonel Ellis put forth his best efforts, devoting day and night to the work he had in hand; and in less than a week recruiting offices were opened in nearly every town in the county, and upwards of thirty persons, mostly of his own selection, had been authorized to recruit for the regiment.

But day after day slipped by without any apparent results. No one volunteered.

The enlistment committee was increased in numbers,* and

* The Governor, in appointing his Committee for this district, empowered them to add to their number whenever and to such extent as they deemed best. Prior to July

met almost daily. But the rolls of the regiment remained blank, or nearly so.

On the 1st day of August but eight men had been enrolled ; and the prospect of raising a regiment was anything but encouraging.

Ellis, and the young men who had rallied round him, were doing the very best they could, but obstacles almost insurmountable met them at every turn.

No sooner did a man make known his determination to enlist than he was approached in some direct, or indirect, way by an enemy of his country, not unfrequently in the person of his nearest neighbor and personal friend.

If a married man of moderate means, the picture of his suffering family—after he should have left them—was painted in the most vivid colors. Remember, they would say, it is for three years. Who will supply the wife and little ones with the wherewith-all to keep the wolf from the door, when the few dollars you may be able to leave with them are gone. (It must be remembered this was before the days of the big bounties). And the thirteen dollars per month, and that paid you at irregular intervals—as those who have been in the service can tell you—why, what can you save for them out of that? simply nothing!

And should you ever return, the chances are you will be a poor miserable cripple—a burden, the support of which will drive your loved wife to your neighbor's wash-tub, or your children to the street for bread.

23d the following named gentlemen from Orange County had been added to the Committee. Some of these gentlemen were already, and most of the others subsequently became, active workers in the good cause.

E. A. Brewster, of Newburgh.
William Fullerton, of Newburgh.
C. H. Winfield, of Goshen.
Thomas Edsall, of Goshen.
Silas Horton, of Goshen.
James Cromwell, of Cornwall.
William Avery, of Cornwall.
Daniel Thompson, of Crawford
C. C. McQuoid, of Wallkill.
Halstead Sweet, of Wallkill.
John G. Wilkin, of Wallkill.
John Cummings, of Wallkill.
Charles St. John, of Port Jervis.
John Conkling, of Port Jervis.
Orville J. Brown, of Port Jervis.
C. M. Lawrence, of Port Jervis.
C. B. Newkirk, of Monroe.
A. S. Dodge, of Mount Hope.
Dorastus Brown, of Greenville.
A. F. Schofield, of Montgomery.
A. G. Owen, of Blooming Grove.
John Cowdrey, of Warwick.
Thomas Welling, of Warwick.

If a man of means, or one without family depending on him for support, arguments almost as strong were used to dissuade him.

But this state of things did not long continue. The mighty hosts of the foe were set in motion toward the fertile North, intent on making good their threat of invasion.

Daily the necessities of the Government became more and more imperative, and at last the theory of prosecuting the war in strict accordance with the Constitution was acknowledged to be a failure, and abandoned. Summary measures were taken for the silencing of those who were discouraging enlistments, and Fort Lafayette was speedily filled with Northern traitors. Then, and not till then, did the people shake off their lethargy and re-enact the grand spectacle first produced by the bombardment of Fort Sumter.

Public meetings were held almost nightly in every hall, church, and school-house in the State. Private bounties were offered, and funds began to be raised for the support of the needy families of those who should volunteer.

The National Capital was once more in danger. The Government was in earnest, and again the sons of freedom sprang to arms, and loud and long went up the shout, "We're coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more."

Up to the 8th of August, not more than a score of volunteers had reported at Colonel Ellis' head-quarters in Goshen. Fifteen days later the regiment was fully organized and ready for the field.

In the following complete list of the members of the regiment at its organization, the names have been arranged with a view to enable the reader to determine at a glance the relative position each person originally occupied.

The battalion is supposed to be moving in column of companies. The Lieutenant-Colonel, Major, Adjutant, and Sergeant-Major are placed in front and rear, instead of in their proper places on the flank of the column, in order that the field, staff, and non-commissioned staff, may be shown in complete, as well as distinct, bodies.

FIELD.

COLONEL A. VAN HORNE ELLIS.



LIEUT.-COLONEL F. M. CUMMINS.



MAJOR JAMES CROMWELL.



STAFF.

JOHN H. THOMPSON,

Major and Surgeon.



T. SCOTT BRADNER,

Captain and Chaplain.



AUGUSTUS DENNISTON,

Lieutenant and Quartermaster.



G. DE PEYSTER ARDEN,

Lieutenant and Adjutant.



EDWARD MARSHALL,

Lieutenant and Asst. Surgeon.



R. V. K. MONTFORT,

Lieut. and 2d Asst. Surgeon.



Field.—The field-officers had all, since the Rebellion began, done honorable military service in the Union army, and one of their number, Lieutenant-Colonel Cummins, had served as a commissioned officer in the war of the United States with Mexico. As to their qualifications for the responsible positions they had now assumed, the reader who is not already acquainted with their antecedents, or has not followed them with weary limbs and blistered feet on the long and rapid march, over hard and dusty roads, beneath a scorching July sun—or plodded after them from early morn till late at night through Virginia's slimy mud and November's chilling rain and sleet and snow—nor yet heard their shrill shouts of "Forward, men! forward!" from amid the smoke of battle, may, I trust, be able to draw a not incorrect estimate from the following record of the services of the gallant regiment they were about to conduct to the front, and such other interesting facts concerning their former histories as the writer has been able to collect, and will, at the proper time, endeavor truthfully to present.

Staff.—Surgeon Thompson was a resident of the village of Goshen, in the vicinity of which he had for a number of years successfully practised the profession of surgeon and physician.

Chaplain Bradner, also a resident of Goshen, was a Presbyterian minister of good standing.

WILLIAM B. WOOD, of "A"—Bugler.

MOSES P. ROSS, of "A"—Bugler.

JOHN G. BUCKLEY,...of "H"—Fife....CHAS. W. BODLE,....of "A"—Drum.

CHAS. WHITEHEAD,...of "H"—Fife....HENRY M. CANNON,..of "A"—Drum.

ARTHUR HAIGH,.... .of "H"—Fife....WILLIAM HAMILTON,..of "B"—Drum.

GEO. W. DIMMICK,....of "D"—Fife....HENRY HOOFMAN, ...of "C"—Drum.

HENRY C. PAYNE,....of "B"—Fife....C. H. VAN GORDON,..of "G"—Drum.

ROBERT L. TRAVIS, of "F"—Drum....JEHIEL PRICE .....of "F"—Drum.

A. A. MILLSPAUGH,. of "K"—Drum....J. M. MERRITT,.....of "G"—Drum.

GEO. W. CAMFIELD, of "K"—Drum....W. JOHNSTON,.....of "D"—Drum.

JOHN N. COLE,.....of "I"—Drum....JAMES H. MCELROY,..of "D"—Drum.

R. L. STEPHENS,....of "E"—Drum....SAML. M. WEEDEN, of "D"—B. Drum.

—HART, DRUM-MAJOR.

Quartermaster Denniston—a son of Hon. Judge Denniston, ex-State Comptroller—was a young man of sterling worth. He resided with his father in the town of Blooming Grove.

Adjutant Arden was not a resident of the county, and did not join the regiment until after its arrival at Washington; that position, during the organization of the battalion at Goshen, having been most satisfactorily filled by William Silliman, who, on the completion of the regiment, became captain of Company "C." Arden was, however, a glorious good fellow, and during his short stay with us made many warm friends.

Dr. Marshall, also a non-resident, did not join the regiment until after it had taken the field, and remained with it but a short time.

Dr. Montfort was a practising physician, residing at Newburgh. He was an energetic young man, of unimpeachable habits and character, highly esteemed by all classes of the community.

Drum-Major Hart had been the successful leader of a noted regimental band. He did not enlist in the regiment, but was employed for a time by Colonel Ellis, who, so far as I can learn, paid for his services from his own well-filled private purse.

CAPTAIN CHARLES H. WEYGANT. (A.)

1ST SERGT. John C. Wood.
CORP. Charles A. Avery.
CORP. O. H. Whitney.
William H. Campbell.
Samuel Yeomans.
William Odell.
Robert Potter.
William Carpenter.
George W. Edwards.
Charles W. Gallow.
Charles McVay.
George Sering.
L. L. Jackson.
John W. Swim.
Robert C. Hunt.
John H. Dingee.
John W. Taylor.
CORP. Thomas Hart.
CORP. Joseph Davey.
CORP. Benj. Z. Bowen.
CORP. Chauncey B. Jones.
Samuel Potter.
Richard Rollings.
Ephraim Stephens.
Henry Arcularius.
Jabez Odell.
Jacob Lent
Benjamin Lancaster.
Joseph L. Simpson.
Charles H. Valentine.
Enos Jenkins.
William McQuoid.
John H. Judson.
James McGrath.
Theodore Smith.
CORP. Abram Bellows.
CORP. Jonathan Birdsall.

James G. Ciles.
John Lewis. SERGT. Peter L. Wood.
Joseph Johnson.
Thomas Lewis.
Joseph Brownley.
John Robinson.
Wesley Morgan.
Newton Gotchieus.
F. B. Gallow. 1ST LIEUT. CHAS. B. WOOD.
James Jones.
Hugh Topping.
Edward Rice.
Robert A. Ashman.
Isaac L. Conklin.
Samuel L. Conklin. SERGT. Peter Rose.
Daniel Ackerman.
Abram Hyatt.
Patrick Flannery.
Samuel Clark.
Thomas Kelley.
Calvin C. Lutes. SERGT. James McCollum.
William Meyers.
Jacob Wilson.
John H. Warford.
John Polhamus.
Allen Owen.
Jeremiah Hartnett. 2D LIEUT. CHAS. T. CRISSEY.
Frank Rhinefield.
Joseph Gardner.
Gilbert D. W. Roat.
John H. Conklin.
Daniel Morgan.

Michael Hager.
William Saunders.
Hirvey Kimball. SERGT. Samuel T. Rollings.

Company "A"—recruited by C. H. Weygant, of Newburgh, and C. B. Wood, of Chester—was made up of men from nearly every town in the county, Newburgh and Cornwall furnishing about half the number. John C. Wood, of Newburgh, was the first man to volunteer as a private soldier in the proposed organization. He was enrolled for this company on the 18th day of July, and for a number of days constituted the rank and file of the regiment. On the 12th of August the company had reached its minimum, and its officers mustering from that date, became the seniors of their respective grades, and secured for their company the right of the line.

CAPTAIN IRA S. BUSH. (F.)

1ST SERGT. L. E. Elston.		
CORP. Charles H. Hull.	A. T. Drake.	
CORP. M. Rensler.	Reuben Doty.	SERGT. E. M. B. Peck.
Nathan Hershler.	A. J. Mesler.	
Levi Cartright.	M. W. Quick.	
Sanford L. Gordon.	Ira Wilcox.	
James H. Taylor.	J. Z. Drake.	
J. S. Crawford.	James Comey.	
John Van Houten.	William Balmos.	
George W. Tompkins.	Jacob Garrison,	
Judson P. Adams.	W. H. H. Hunt.	1ST. LIEUT. THOS. J. QUICK.
William V. C. Carmer.	A. J. McCarty.	
Josiah Garrison.	James J. Baker.	
J. J. Harrigan.	Floyd S. Goble.	
T. R. Allington.	J. C. Magee.	
C. B. Anderson.	Ransom Wilcox.	
H. R. Broadhead	Nelson Dunlap.	
E. H. Garrison.	James Carty.	SERGT. John D. Drake.
CORP. S. S. Crawford.	I. G. Gillson.	
CORP. Wm. W. Decker.	G. H. Langton.	
CORP. J. L. Kalbfuss.	Thomas B. Peck.	
CORP. O. U. Knapp.	R. L. White.	
P. A. F. Hanaka.	J. M. Young.	
B. L. Tompkins.	E. Coddington.	
William C. Van Sickle.	W. S. Cook.	SERGT. A. P. Francisco.
Lewis Williams.	A. S. Barkley.	
Lewis D. Adams.	G. W. Adams.	
John T. Fisher.	A. W. Quick.	
J. Terwilliger.	Charles P. Kirk.	
F. H. Rossman.	C. A. Elston.	
Charles Roberty.	J. N. Hazen.	
Jeremiah Sisco.	Ira Gordon.	
David Titsworth.	Job M. Snell.	2D LIEUT. S. W. HOTCHKISS.
H. B. Appleman.	William Boyst.	
Barney F. Kean.	George Garrett.	
Philip M. Ogg.	Edward Sharp.	
W. H. Schofield.	F. Rundle.	
J. Cunningham.		
CORP. Charles Peters.	T. H. Jefrey.	
CORP. W. H. Patterson.	John G. Ogg.	SERGT. Horace Hammond.

Company "F" was recruited by Ira S. Bush, and was organized at Port Jervis. Its officers, and nearly all its men, were residents of the town of Deerpark. On the 20th of August it arrived at Goshen with full ranks, and after each of its members had been divested of his wearing apparel, and caused to walk on his hands, jump straight up, so that his feet were at least five feet from the floor, and to lift something less than a thousand pounds to test his bone and muscle, and had, by a series of heavily worded questions on some weighty scientific matter, been examined as to his mental status, they were pronounced by our learned Surgeon Thompson to be not only *compos mentis*, but a little superior, physically, to any company he had as yet examined.

CAPTAIN JAMES W. BENEDICT. (D.)

1ST SERGT. Wm. H. Dill.		
CORP. Edmund F. Allen.	Samuel Kniffin.	
CORP. Ebenezer Holbert.	William J. Miles.	SERGT. Wm. B. Van Houten.
John M. Garrison.	John Raymond.	
William L. Becraft.	Jesseniah Dolson.	
William Wright.	Martin Mulvehill.	
James H. Clark.	Richard Romine.	
R. Quackenbush.	John S. Gray.	
Norman A. Sly.	Charles W. Davis.	
Joel McCann.	Gilliam Bertholf.	1ST LIEUT. DANIEL SAYER.
Ezra Hyatt.	Benjamin Gray.	
George W. Decker.	William Dolson.	
John W. Smith.	George B. Kinney.	
William H. Tomer.	John Hall.	
Cornelius H. Holbert.	John K. Clark.	
John C. Degraw.	Wells Benjamin.	
John W. Leeper.	Joseph B. Ray.	
Robert C. Leeper.	J. F. Quackenbush.	SERGT. John Cowdrey, Jr.
Norman L. Dill.	Wm. F. Quackenbush.	
William E. Hyatt.	David Currey.	
Edward Royce.	Gilbert S. Howard.	
CORP. E. M. Bahrman.	David F. Raymond.	
CORP. Henry H. Hyatt.	Olander A. Humphrey.	
CORP. Hiram G. Herrick.	John N. Rose.	
CORP. F. A. Benedict.	Daniel Stephens.	SERGT. James G. Irwin.
Joseph Wood.	Wm. H. Callister.	
Coleman Morris.	John Edwards.	
Robert Connelly.	Isaac Garrison.	
R. S. Lameroux.	S. W. Garrison.	
Nathan Hunt.	Nelson Speer.	
Abram C. Forshee.	William Mann.	
Cornelius Allison.	H. S. Quackenbush.	
William Wright.	J. H. Ackerman.	2D LIEUT. JOHN W. HOUSTON.
Zopher Wilson.	Joseph Ashley.	
Joseph Brooks.	Thomas S. Storms.	
James H. Bertholf.	John Gannin.	
Edward J. Blake.	John Degraw.	
William McGarrah.	A. P. Sherman.	
Carl G. Hoffman.	F. M. Wemer.	
Charles H. Acker.	Daniel P. Dugan.	
John B. Weymer.		
CORP. Gideon H. Pelton.	Thomas P. Powell.	
CORP. Thomas M. Hyatt.	James Pembleton.	SERGT. Thos. G. Mabee.

Company "D" was recruited and organized at Warwick—in which town nearly all of its members claimed not only a residence but birth-place. It was recruited by James W. Benedict and Daniel Sayer, and reported in a body at Colonel Ellis' head-quarters on the 16th of August. This company was composed principally of intelligent young farmers, many of whose faces turned scarlet, and fists involuntarily clenched, at Adjutant Silliman's gruff "Take off your hat, sir," as they entered his presence to be mustered in. They were proud of the title of "The Warwick Boys."

CAPTAIN LEANDER CLARK. (I.)

1ST SERGT. W. W. Smith.
CORP. George D. Scott.
CORP. John H. Stanton.
Whitmore Terwilliger.
John McGow.
James Partington.
James T. Thitchener.
John N. Knapp.
Samuel McQuaid.
William Wallace.
Whitmore Baxter.
John H. Brooks.
Nelson Foot.
David Hepper.
John Joice.
Alex. M. Valet.
Thomas McBride.
James McGregor.
Spencer C. Brooks.
CORP. Martin Mould.
CORP. J. B. Chatfield.
CORP. A. P. Millspaugh.
CORP. David L. Kidd.
William Whan.
C. S. Allen.
A. B. Crawford.
Thomas Farley.
William Hamilton.
John Holland.
John T. Laroue.
Henry Losey.
Robert Rose.
J. P. Wightman.
Ira Barnhart.
James S. Barrett.
Alexander B. Crawford.
Giles Curran.
Patrick Keane.
Charles Lozier.
David Stormes.
Henry R. Turner.
T. R. Van Tassel.
CORP. J. S. Alwood.

Edward Oney.
Joseph Hanna. SERGT. Charles Stewart.
William Milligan.
William Sutherland.
Robert Wilson.
John Hammil.
Jedutha Millspaugh.
Wm. H. Milliken.
Wm. G. Warren. 1ST LT. JNO. B. STANBROUGH.
Rensalaer D. Baird.
James Bovell.
James Cooper.
James Flannigan.
Anson Hamilton.
Nathaniel Jackson.
Matthew Manny.
John A. Meyers. SERGT. Amos M. Eager.
J. H. McCallister.
Newton B. Pierson.
Alex. Thompson.
John C. Vanzyle.
Eli Vance.
James Cullen.
Samuel Chalmers.
Cortland Bodine.
Charles Edwards.
John Gordon. SERGT. A. T. Vanderlyn.
James C. Haggerty.
Isaac Ellison.
David Loughridge.
William Moore.
Patrick O'Neil.
Patrick Ryan.
Samuel A. White.
Smith Birdsley. 2D LIEUT. ISAAC M. MARTIN.
John H. Brown.
William Edgar.
James A. Smith.
Henry H. Snyder.
David Carey.
G. N. Tucker.
George Weygant. SERGT. Wilson Weygant.

Company "I" was composed principally of volunteers from Newburgh. It had in its ranks men of all sizes, classes, trades, and professions—and though the majority of its members were American born, Old Erin and the land of "Sir Walter" and "The bonny Bobby Burns" were well and strongly represented. The company was recruited by Leander Clark, J. B. Stanbrough, and I. M. Martin, all of Newburgh It was completed, organized, and accepted on the afternoon of August 20th, and was known as the Newburgh company.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM SILLIMAN. (C.)

1ST SERGT. Wm. H. Many.

CORP. Thomas Foley.	Isaac Odell.	
CORP. Nathan B. Potts.	David Odell.	SERGT. John W. Foley.
William A. Homan.	W. H. Decker.	
Duncan W. Boyd.	Charles Knapp.	
Thomas Rodman.	John H. Finch.	
Cornelius L. Rhodes.	Samuel Lewis.	
William Bodenstein.	James Curry.	
Andrew M. Boyd.	David Wright.	
George Florence.	Frederick Lamereaux.	
George J. Thorn.	David Bowen.	
Morvalden Odell.	Geo. W. Cabrey.	1ST. LIEUT. WM. BRONSON.
Daniel Pine.	Peter Conklin.	
John L. Goodsall.	Leonard Cary.	
James P. Moulton.	William White.	
Sweezey Degraw.	Ephraim Tompkins.	
Isaiah Rumsey.	Joseph Helms.	
Albert Wise.	Daniel O'Hara.	SERGT. Geo. H. Chandler.
Robert H. Foley.	William Twiggs.	
CORP. Thomas Milson.	Albert I. Bunce.	
CORP. A. H. Barton.	James Montgomery.	
CORP. Oscar Terwilliger.	John Tompkins.	
CORP. George L. Brewster.	John Hagan.	
William S. Brooks.	Johan Fixel.	SERGT. Geo. G. Taylor.
William Mead.	John Thompson.	
William W. Amerman.	George Briggs.	
Charles Chatfield.	Nathan Edwards.	
James H. Barnes.	Wm. H. G. Thorp.	
Clark Smith, Jr.	James D. Tilton.	
Robert Rush.	Benj. F. Flagg.	
Samuel Dodge.	Abram Merritt.	2D LIEUT. H. P. RAMSDELL.
Charles H. Goodsall.	Thomas M. Brooks.	
Daniel S. Gardner.	Frederick Dezendorf.	
Stephen W. Brown.	Wm. H. H. Rhodes.	
James A. Ward.	David L. Wescott.	
William King.	John H. Blair.	
George G. King.	John Sullivan.	
William R. Owen.	James E. Daniels.	
Daniel C. Jennings.	Samuel Bradenburgh.	
James Ryan.	Charles C. Clark.	
CORP. Peter P. Hazen.	Daniel C. Rider.	SERGT. Thomas Taft.

CORP. Jonas G. Davis—Color-Bearer.

Company "C" was called the Cornwall company, and the homes of a majority of its members were located in that town; Newburgh, New Windsor, and Monroe were also honorably and quite extensively represented. It was recruited by James Cromwell and William Silliman, of Cornwall, and William Bronson and Henry P. Ramsdell, of Newburgh. Its ranks were full on the 15th of August, but the company was not fully organized until the 20th. It was, however, given the title of "C," and designated color company, both of which belonged, by military usage, to Company "D."

CAPTAIN DAVID CRIST. (H.)

1ST SERGT. A. McDougal.		
CORP. Theron Bodine.	Wm. Buchanan.	
CORP. David Mould.	Judson B. Lupton.	SERGT. Geo. B. Youngblood.
Noah Kimbark.	Henry Mathews.	
John Rediker.	G. M. Legg.	
David D. Post.	Charles H. Stevens.	
S. S. Youngblood.	William McVay.	
Charles W. Evans.	Nathan H. Duffie.	
Milton Crist.	James Crist.	1ST LIEUT. HENRY GOWDY.
Josiah Dawson.	Charles A. Foster.	
J. A. Milliken.	E. D. Van Keuren.	
Charles W. Tindall.	William Brown.	
Charles Seaman.	Jesse F. Camp.	
Van Keuren Crist.	Thornton Dawson.	
Edward Hunter.	William H. Dawson.	
Daniel Traphagen.	Jermiah M. Crist.	SERGT. William H. Cox.
Benjamin Dutcher.	John Hatch.	
CORP. John R. Post.	Wm. S. M. Hatch.	
CORP. Thomas W Bradley.	Grandison Judson.	
CORP. Howland W. Davis.	Robert Mackeny.	
CORP. A. R. Rhinehart.	Wm. H. Whitside.	SERGT. John Rowland.
Daniel T. Tears.	John E. Kidd.	
George Batters.	John Duffie.	
Henry Seaman.	Thomas H. Baker.	
Charles A. McGregor.	William B. Sherman.	
Lyman Fairchild.	John McCann.	
Andrew Armstrong.	David Hawley.	
Joseph W. Delamater.	Daniel W. Baker.	2D LIEUT. JOHN R. HAYS.
Chester Judson.	George O. Fuller.	
Thomas O'Connell.	Henry Kidd Jr.	
William Dawson (2d).	Abram Hawley.	
James E. Homan.	Jacob F. Jordan.	
Francis S. Brown.	Angus Carman.	
Clark B. Gallation.	Thomas Vanstrander.	
Daniel Carman.		
CORP. A. B. Rapalje.	William Shelp.	
CORP. W. L. Fairchild.	Andrew Bowman.	SERGT. Francis Mead.

Company "H" was raised in the town of Montgomery by David Crist and others. There were among its members an unusually large number of men who were possessed of a goodly share of this world's goods, and left behind them most attractive homes. Operatives from the Walden Knife Works formed another considerable portion. This company boasted a large amount of superior musical talent. It was partially organized at the village of Walden, in and near which most of its members resided, and reported at the general rendezvous August 20th; but being a few men short of the required number, its organization was not completed until August 23d.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM A. McBIRNEY. (E.)

1ST SERGT. T. M. Roberson.		
CORP. William J. Daley.	Joseph H. Johnson.	
CORP. Z. Dusenberry.	Zebulon Hallock.	SERGT. John R. Banker.
Curtis Ackerman.	Isaac W. Daley.	
John W. Taylor.	Wm. L. Dougherty.	
James B. Moores.	James Sloat.	
Abram Rogers.	George Brown.	
Nicholas Clearwater.	John H. Sarvis.	
Thomas Clearwater.	William Mackey.	
David B. Wheat.	Judson Kelly.	1ST. LT. WM. A. VERPLANK.
James W. Parsons.	Isaac Furgerson.	
John Scott.	Hezekiah Harris.	
Lewis W. Baxter.	Horace Wheeler.	
Theophilus Dolson.	John Burns.	
Joseph A. Blivin.	Chas. M. Everett.	
Peter T. Stalter.	Chas. J. Fosdick.	SERGT. S. H. Brower.
Edward Glenn.	John C. Staples.	
A. W. Lamereaux.	Solomon Carr.	
James A. Beaks.	Lewis Gardiner.	
CORP. John H. Little.	Matthew W. Wood.	
CORP. Hiram Ketchum.	Hiram Clark.	
CORP. Oscar Harris, Jr.	Richard Traver.	
CORP. Wm. H. Howell.	Wm. H. Shaw.	SERGT. John J. Scott.
John Granville.	Stephen E. Ostrum.	
John J. Stafford.	Adam W. Beakes.	
Simeon Wheat.	Lewis M. Tonton.	
Wm. P. Uptergrove.	Jonathan Force.	
Josiah Harris.	George C. Godfrey.	
Benjamin Hull.	Henry M. Howell.	
William Decker.	Arch. Freeman.	2D LT. A. WHITTENBEECHER.
Daniel Halstead.	Lewis Trister.	
William W. Drake.	Charles C. Haxton.	
Jacob M. Coddington.	John W. Hirst.	
Charles Newell.	Miles Vance.	
James M. Coddington	John R. Banker.	
Samuel Clark Jr.	Charles Downing.	
George Dunmoodey.		
CORP. Adam W. Miller.	George Nichols.	
CORP. Moses Crist.	John F. Miller.	SERGT. William Price.

Company "E" was composed principally of men from Mount Hope, Wallkill, Crawford, Newburgh, and Goshen; though, like Company "A," it had in its ranks representatives from nearly every town in the county. It was recruited by William A. McBirney, of Wallkill, William A. Verplank, of New Windsor, and Adolphus Whittenbeecher, of Newburgh. The date of its organization is August 19th. Crawford and Wallkill were always justly proud of their representatives in the ranks of this company.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM A. JACKSON. (K.)

1ST SERGT. Jacob Denton.
CORP. W. W. Ritch.
CORP. A. S. Holbert.
John C. Vermylia.
John Carroll.
Jacob E. Smith.
John W. Parks.
Jacob Cameron.
John C. Hawley.
Alonzo Price.
James H. Conklin.
William H. Corter.
David U. Quick.
Egbert S. Puff.
William H. Falkner,
William W. Carpenter.
Nathan M. Hallock.
CORP. J. J. Crawford.
CORP. W. T. Ogden.
CORP. James McCoy.
CORP. Isaac Decker.
Stephen B. Kerr.
William F. Christie.
John R. Meehan.
Samuel Malcomb.
Reuben C. Miller.
Stephen W. Frost.
Solomon W. Smith.
Cornelius Crans.
Joseph Point.
John Skelton.
A. W. Miller.
George Randall.
Daniel E. Webb.
A. G. Randall.
Cornelius Herron.
David S. Purdy.
CORP. H. J. Wright.
CORP. G. Van Sciver.

Charles M. Weller. SERGT. Winfield W. Parsons.
David N. Wilkin.
Hugh Foley.
Henry C. Baker.
John W. Pitts.
J. R. Conning.
Thomas Kincaid.
H. R. Mayette.
Paul Holliday. 1ST LIEUT. JAMES F. ROOSA.
J. McDermott.
Sylvanus Grier.
N. J. Conklin.
Wm. H. H. Wood.
Patrick Cuneen.
Jonathan Acker.
Michael Cullen. SERGT. Daniel E. Webb.
Isaac Kanoff.
Henry W. Smith.
Samuel V. Tidd.
H. D. Paret.
G. H. Stephens.
N. B. Mullen.
N. C. Drake. SERGT. W. W. Bailey.
Gabriel Coleby.
Charles S Godfrey.

Jonathan Corey.
D. Carpenter.
Ira S. Ketcham.
Gordon B. Cox.
John O'Brien. 2D LIEUT. JAMES FINNEGAN.
R. McCartney.
J. M. Stalbird.

Peter Noll.

John Studor.
Alonzo S. Frost. SERGT. Lewis S. Wisner.

Company "K."—On the 23d of August, James Finnegan, with some twenty men from Newburgh and Goshen, joined forces with William A. Jackson and James F. Roosa, who had recruited sixty odd men in and about Middletown, their native village, and with a full company stepped into the only remaining gap; and the regiment was complete. This company was not lacking in either muscle or intelligence, and judging from the swarm of lady visitors it daily entertained while the regiment remained at Goshen, it must have carried with it to the field the hearts of half the tender maidens of Wallkill.

CAPTAIN ISAAC NICOLL. (G.)

1ST SERGT. W. H. Benjamin.		
CORP. Isaac Decker.	Harvey A. Brock.	
CORP. Chas. H. Wright.	Selah Brock.	SERGT. F. F. Wood.
Matherius Sager.	Daniel S. White.	
Albert W. Parker.	Peter Higgins.	
David H. Corwin.	John Ostrander.	
Grant B. Benjamin.	Hector Finney.	
Garret H. Bennett.	Stephen Decker.	
George W. Odell.	Abraham Denney.	
Daniel Rigenbaugh.	Henry Dill.	
Cyrenius Giles.	John Munhall.	1ST LT. JAS. O. DENNISTON.
Samuel D. Latham.	John Chambers.	
Isaac W. Parker.	Elijah Fenton.	
A. J. Van Zile.	David Lowers.	
William Campbell.	Gilbert Peet.	
Alexander Jones.	W. H. Trainer.	
Abram Rapalje.	John Trainer.	
Ralph R. Riker.	Wm. L. Miller.	SERGT. Robert Fairchild.
Abram Stalter.	Joseph Miller.	
CORP. C. W. Merritt.	George E. Griffin.	
CORP. J. J. Taylor.	Thomas Corbett.	
CORP. Daniel Giles.	Alexander Trainer.	
CORP. J. M. Miller.	William Rake.	
George R. Fitzgerald.	James Roke.	
John M. Calyer.	Lewis P. Miller.	SERGT. Horatio J. Estabrook.
William Hauxhurst.	William Fosbury.	
Francis E. Merritt.	Joshua V. Cole.	
Peter F. Bernier.	Henry Brooks.	
Hiram W. De Groat.	Daniel Smith.	
Nelson De Groat.	Walter Barton.	
Francis McMahan.	William Jackson.	
John Newkirk.	J. M. Ketcham.	
George W. Coleman.	William Tysoe.	2D LIEUT. DAVID GIBBS.
Charles T. Cornelius.	John H. White.	
William D. Dawkins.	A. H. Merritt.	
Cornelius Hughes.	Eli Hughes.	
Napoleon B. Odell.	Joseph Jones.	
John H. H. Conklin.	Oliver Miller.	
Reuben Turner, Jr.	Reuben Turner, Sr.	
Daniel Rider.	George Cripps.	
Charles Benjamin.	William E. Cannon.	
CORP. S. T. Estabrook.	Patrick Touhey.	
CORP. Charles G. Cooper.	Chas. A. Ensign.	SERGT. Lewis T. Shultz.

Company "G" was recruited by Isaac Nicoll and J. O. Denniston, of Blooming Grove, F. F. Wood, of Chester, and D. Gibb, of Newburgh. Some fifty of its members were from Blooming Grove, fifteen were from Newburgh, and the balance from the towns of New Windsor, Monroe, and Chester. Its organization was completed August 20. This fine body of men were generally spoken of as the "Washingtonville Boys," but frequently called the "praying company;" and there certainly were among its members a considerable number of brave Christian men.

CAPTAIN HENRY S. MURRAY. (B.)

1ST SERGT. G. S. Tuthill.		
CORP. R. R. Murray.	M. S. Holbert.	
CORP. John Williams.	Simon Bellis.	SERGT. Bodowine C. Lee.
John Eckert.	D. McCormick.	
William Slawson.	David Babcock.	
Reuben Rynders.	Joseph Bross.	
Daniel Babcock.	Herman Crans.	
Charles Harrington.	John Glanz.	
George Shawcross.	Francis Lee.	
Wesley Storms.	Clark Coon.	1ST LIEUT. W. E. WEYGANT.
Samuel Shultz.	James Gavin.	
David P. Barnes.	Jesse Hunter.	
E. M. Carpenter.	E. N. Laine.	
N. C. Hanford.	John Ryerson.	
R. J. Holland.	B. E. Birdsall.	
Ezra F. Tuthill.	Matthew Crawley.	
William H. Hazen.	George Hawley.	SERGT. J. H. Birdsall.
John C. Storms.	George Babcock.	
Charles B. Hazen.	Moses S. Clark.	
CORP. Wm. G. White.	George Culver.	
CORP. Wm. Valentine.	James Lewis.	
CORP. W. D. Millspaugh.	William Lamereaux.	
E. B. Benjamin.	Patrick Leach.	
John P. Kingsland.	Benjamin M. Little.	
E. T. Mapes.	James Scott.	SERGT. J. Harvey Hanford.
S. Millspaugh.	William H. Luckey.	
J. M. Merritt.	James Odell.	
William H. Merritt.	Henry J. Powell.	
William Snyder.	Hugh McShane.	
Alfred Yeomans.	John F. Brown.	
Samuel Green.	A. J. Messenger.	
R. W. Gardner.	J. J. Messenger.	
Henry O. Smith.	Joseph Pratt.	2D LIEUT. WM. E. MAPES.
Charles H. Bull.	S. B. Smith.	
James Finley.	Albert Youngs.	
Samuel Sherman.		
A. W. Tucker.	John A. Space.	
D. R. P. Van Gordon.	Harrison Storms.	
William E. Titus.		
CORP. Harrison Bull.	Michael Mooney.	
CORP. Coe L. Reevs.	S. Garrison.	SERGT. C. A. Wheeler.

Company "B," known as the Goshen company, was recruited by H. S. Murray, of Goshen, William E. Mapes, of Florida, and N. K. Weygant, of Newburgh. The majority of its members were residents of the town of Goshen; a squad of eight came from Newburgh, and some ten others were from the town of Warwick. In the ranks of this company were some of the very best and a few of the poorest soldiers in the regiment. It was the second company organized, and was given its proper position—the left of the line.

NON-COMMISSIONED STAFF.

JAMES A. GRIER,
Sergeant-Major.

HENRY F. TRAVIS,
Quartermaster's Sergeant.

ELLIS A. POST,
Commissary Sergeant.

JOHN VAN HORNE,
Hospital Steward.

WAGONERS.

ALFRED GRAY, COMPANY "D," WAGON-MASTER.

Edward Ginner....Company "A."

Jeremiah Cole.....Company "F."

J. E. Collins.....Company "I."

Wm. H. Decker....Company "C."

Robert Connelly, Jr.....Co. "C."

John Duffie. .....Company "H."

Ezekiel Brundage, Company "G."

George Morgan....Company "E."

Talmage Burhans..Company "K."

Joseph Gordon...Company "B." *

SUTLER.

N. J. KELSEY.

Among the company officers—to all of whom particular reference will be made in succeeding pages of this work—Captain Murray, Captain Silliman, and Lieutenant Wood, had been in the service. Sergeant-Major Grier and Quartermaster's Sergeant Travis had both served under Colonel Ellis at Bull Run, and a number of others among the non-commissioned officers and privates had already learned, upon the battle-field, the smell of rebel powder.

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* When the battalion was about to be mustered, it was found that five companies exceeded the maximum allowed. There were also several small squads of men who had enlisted for the regiment, for whom no place was found. These men, numbering, all told, about one hundred and twenty-five, were left behind, as the nucleus of what was afterwards known as the Ironsides regiment. The names of some thirty others were retained on the rolls of the regiment, who either did not report to be mustered in the United States service, or left without leave immediately after. As none of these men ever in reality became a part of the 124th, their names have been omitted.

CHAPTER II.

AT GOSHEN—TRIP TO WASHINGTON—SOLDIER LIFE AT MINERS HILL.

ON the 24th of August orders were received from Washington, directing Colonel Ellis to hold his command in readiness to move on the 27th instant.

Thursday, the 26th, had been designated by the ladies of Orange, as the day on which they would present to the regiment that stand of colors beneath which he whose hand should receive them, and so many of the brave men over whose heads they were that day to be unfurled, should suffer, bleed, and die, that the Union and Liberty might live.

It was a clear bright day, and with the rising of the sun the friends of the American Guard* began to arrive; and for hours there poured into the village of Goshen such a throng of men, women, and children, as had seldom before been seen in its streets.

At three P. M. the regiment was formed, and Colonel Ellis, having placed himself at the head of his field and staff, in front of it, the Hon. Charles H. Winfield stepped forward, and at the close of a most patriotic speech, on behalf of the donors handed the colors to Colonel Ellis, who, loosing them to the breeze, promised the multitude there assembled they should never be disgraced; concluding with these words: "If you never again see these colors, you will never again see those who bear them from you." The Hon. David Gedney then delivered, in behalf of the recipients, an impressive speech of acceptance. After which Miss Charlotte E. Coulter stepped forward, and with a modest, but

* Before the regiment had received its number—in fact, before the organization was half completed—it was christened by Colonel Ellis, "The American Guard." And by that title it was most generally known, up to its first general engagement at the battle of Chancellorsville.

grand little speech, presented a pair of embroidered silk guidons —a gift from the fair daughters of the little town of Wawayanda.

This ceremony over, the regiment was dismissed, and the companies returned to their respective streets, where many of their officers were formally presented with swords and trappings of various kinds. After which, the men were soon surrounded by friends and loved ones anxious to spend a few short hours with their soldier boys before the final parting came.

And many a praying mother, as she that day stowed away in her son's knapsack articles of clothing or food which she had prepared for him with her own hands, slipped away in some corner, out of immediate sight, a little Bible, with the holy name of mother written therein, hoping, praying, that though he was not much used to reading it at home, it might not be entirely neglected when, deprived of the comforts and protection of that home, —he came to experience the privations and dangers of the tedious march and terrible battle-field.

Nearly every house in and about Goshen was filled that night with those who remained to witness the departure on the morrow. But the morning passed away, and day wore into night again, and yet the regiment remained at Goshen. Arms were not forthcoming; and they must wait for them.

Continuing our drills without arms, and with sticks and the few guns we could borrow, several well improved and pleasant days were spent at Camp Wickham.

But on the morning of the 5th of September, there arrived simultaneously: a telegram announcing our guns at New York city; orders positively fixing the following day as the time of our departure, and Captain William G. Edgerton of the Regular Army, who forthwith mustered us into the service of the United States of America.

And at one o'clock P. M., on Saturday, September 6, 1862, we bid adieu to our first camp, with its long lines of rough barracks and the pleasant grounds on which many had received their first instruction in the duties of the soldier and the evolutions of the battalion; and, without arms, but with banners flying and drums beat-

ing a lively tune; with knapsacks and haversacks swelled to their utmost capacity, with not only wearing apparel that would never be worn and food that would never be eaten, but with books to read, and keepsakes—tokens of remembrance from mothers, sisters, wives, children, and loved ones, many of which, however highly prized, would on the first long march have to be abandoned—we moved through throngs of weeping ones to the depot, where the last hand-shakings and final adieus were given; and at two P. M. the heavily laden train, with wild shrieks to warn away the clinging multitudes, moved off, and we were on our way to the seat of war.

As we passed out of Goshen, cheers loud and prolonged followed us till out of hearing. At every depot crowds with loyal hearts sent after us shouts of approbation, and ever and anon, as our train shot along, we would catch from sweet voices familiar notes of patriotic songs.

At length we passed beyond the limits of our county; but there was little change in the scenes which greeted us, save that forms and faces were no longer familiar.

Every depot all along through Rockland and New Jersey had its shouting, waving crowd.

At one place, high up on a projecting rock, stood an old man dressed in a military suit of Revolutionary times, the thin locks of his long white hair floating in the breeze, leaning with one hand on his staff, and with the other feebly waving the Stars and Stripes, while two little girls, dressed in the purest white, knelt one on either side of him, their little arms stretched out and their eyes turned heavenward, as if in earnest prayer to the God of nations for the preservation and success of the defenders of the Union their great grandsire had fought to establish.

In due time we reached Jersey City, and after some delay, crossed to New York, and took up a roundabout line of march for the Park barracks, where nearly all, after partaking of the contents of their haversacks, stretched themselves out on the pine mattresses there furnished them, and were soon asleep.

The New York *Tribune* of that date contained a notice of the regiment, from which the following extract is taken: "We have seldom been more pleased with the general appearance of a regiment than with the 124th New York Volunteers; the most influential families in Orange County are represented in its ranks. The regiment contains . . . brave, intelligent, healthy young Americans, the very cream of the regimental district."

Sunday morning we were visited by numbers of Orange County New Yorkers, and in the afternoon took cars for Philadelphia.

Our guns—Austrian rifles, with sword-bayonets—were very heavy, and before leaving the barracks, many a knapsack was lightened of parts of its contents; and the bunks were left strewn with clothing, books, and traps of all kind—for our short tramp through the city had convinced many of the utter impossibility of making a rapid march of any length, under the monstrous loads with which they had started out.

The exchange of one's soft bed for bare, hard boards, is not such an event as is usually looked forward to with much pleasure. But that step once taken, the next is comparatively easy.

At three o'clock Monday morning we were *resting* on the streets of Philadelphia, with side-walks for beds and knapsacks for pillows.

We had, however, lain there but a short time when we received from the ladies of the Quaker City an invitation to breakfast. Moving a short distance to a building devoted to the purpose, we found, notwithstanding the early hour, a number of ladies whose carriages awaited them at the door, there to receive us; superintend the pouring of our coffee, and see that we were bountifully served with the luxuries, as well as substantial and well-cooked food with which the scrupulously clean tables were heavily laden.

At noon we were in Baltimore, and our march across that city was made under a scorching sun, the heat of which was so intense that a number of our men fell from sunstroke, and had to be left behind.

At two o'clock Tuesday morning we were sleeping soundly on the ground and on the stone blocks in front of the Capitol.

There were rough board barracks at Washington, into which the regiment might have been taken, but for reasons which need not be here stated, Colonel Ellis, who purposed spending the remainder of the night with his command, chose to bivouac in the open air, and led us from the depot up to the clean ground, in among the granite blocks which now form a portion of the north wing of the Capitol, but were then lying in an unfinished state, scattered over the plain in front of it. The writer, after some hesitation, had chosen the earth rather than the stone for a bed, and was in the act of spreading his blankets near an immense piece of granite, when Colonel Ellis came along, and sprang to the top of it, saying as he did so: "Weygant, this is the identical feather-bed I slept on when I first visited Washington with the 71st; toss up your blankets and let me heave to alongside of you." Ten minutes later he was fast asleep; and in ten more it mattered but little to me whether the bed on which I lay was stone or down. When I awoke my face was well-nigh blistered from the hot rays of the morning sun.

Here the regiment was tendered its first breakfast direct from the hands of Uncle Sam; but with the recollections of that superb meal at Philadelphia so fresh in their memory, the filth and stench of that government soup-house was too much for the sons of Orange, and hardly a score of them entered.

That afternoon we marched to Camp Chase on Arlington Heights; and on what had so recently been General Lee's estate, we for the first time encamped under canvas.

We remained in Camp Chase two or three days, just long enough to get our grounds nicely cleared and cleaned, and our tents looking ship-shape, when suddenly our buglers appeared before the Colonel's tent, and sounded a call which very few of the men understood or had ever heard before. When it ceased, all hands were out of their tents, and you could hear from all over the camp the inquiries, What's that? What does that mean?

The few old soldiers among them, without answering a word,

began pulling down their tents, which they in most instances, occupied jointly with others who were green at the business of soldiering.

This unceremonious pulling down of tents was the occasion of several quite lively fisticuffs, and might have resulted in something more serious; but fortunately there was in our camp at the time a small, dirty-looking drummer-boy from some New York city regiment, who, comprehending the situation, jumped up on a stump that stood near the color line, and gave, in the following short speech, the desired information.

"I say, brave soger boys, that old cuss you just heard yell, why, his right name is, Strike Tents, and my skillet for it, you will get right well acquainted with him afore long, but old sogers like me, as knows him well, calls him *git up and git;* so shoulder your shanties, grab blunderbusses and all. But afore you go, brave sogers, let me give you one word of advice, Just leave your feather beds and carpets right where they are, and when you come back if I'm here, call and pay your respects;" and kissing his hand, our young informant with "I say, fellers, has any of you a hunk of pig-tail to spare?" jumped down.

Half an hour later "To the colors" was sounded, and we moved off about four miles to a very pleasant spot, which we christened Camp Ellis. Here we were attached to Piatt's brigade of Whipple's division, Heintzleman's corps, and the work of familiarizing ourselves with the various duties of camp life, and of preparation for the sterner work which awaited us, was begun in earnest; and all were soon willing to acknowledge that soldier life in its mildest form was far from being mere child's play. At five o'clock in the morning reveille was sounded, followed by roll-call and an early breakfast; at six, surgeon's call and officers' drill; at seven, guard mounting; at eight, squad drill, which lasted until half-past ten. In the afternoon police duty was begun at one o'clock, and lasted until three, when company drill began, and was followed by battalion drill, which ended in a dress parade at six P.M. Tattoo was sounded at a quarter of nine, and Taps at nine, when lights

were extinguished, noise ceased, and all in camp, except the guards and the officer who commanded them, were permitted to sleep.

Our division commander, General Whipple, a graduate of West Point, was a small, slight, feminine-looking man; but, as we soon learned, a kind-hearted thorough gentleman, ever mindful of the comfort, health, and lives of those under him, and withal an able, true, and brave soldier.

Our Brigadier-General, Piatt, was a tall, gloomy-looking Western man, and a most strict disciplinarian. There were with us in his brigade the 122d Pennsylvanian, a nine-months' regiment, the glorious old 86th New York, our twin regiment throughout the war, and the 1st Ohio battery. The Pennsylvanians, though they had seen a little service, presented nearly as long a front, and when on dress parade had almost as new and fresh an appearance as did the 124th. The line of the 86th New York was not half so long, having suffered severely under McClellan in the Peninsular campaign; but when its little companies of tanned veterans, in their faded, dingy-looking blue, formed on their tattered, weather-stained colors—dressed to a perfect line, with the slightest perceptible turn of their heads, and brought their guns to an order with a single thud—we were ready to doff our caps, as in the presence of our superiors. The artillerymen too, were veterans; and our brigade numbered, all told, about 2,200 men.

Our duties were not long confined to the camp, but soon began to extend a little beyond, and to give us slight foretastes of the field. Several small squads of the enemy's cavalry having a few days before our arrival at Camp Ellis, penetrated to within a short distance of Washington, a strong infantry picket line had been established; and to our brigade was assigned the duty of covering a section which crossed the Leesburg turnpike some three miles beyond our camp.

About two o'clock P. M., Thursday, September 25, we again broke camp, and moved off some six miles, to a piece of woods on the west side of Miners' Hill, where we built huge log-fires, and bivouacked around them for the night.

Next morning about a hundred of our number were ordered to report for picket duty; and, accompanied by similar details from the other two regiments of our brigade, were led off by one of General Piatt's aids to a new position on the line.

This picket tour, so far as the men from the 124th were concerned, was simply a day of rest and feasting. They were held as grand reserve, and pitched their tents in the door yard of one of Virginia's "good Union men," who was "most happy" to deal out to them all the eatables he had on hand, even to the very last pint of milk he could strip from his lean cows, for a simple equivalent in greenbacks. So anxious was this good Union man to serve his guests, he sat up all that night watching his cows, to prevent "the tarnal critters sucking themselves," in order that he might have a good supply of milk on hand "for the young gentlemen's breakfasts."

During the afternoon of the 26th, the regiment moved to the opposite, or eastern, slope of Miners' Hill, where they again pitched tents in regular order, and resumed their usual duties; calling their new grounds Camp Cromwell, after their gallant Major, who by his kind, yet dignified and soldierly bearing and unfeigned solicitude for the comfort and welfare of the men under him, was gradually gaining a warm place in the hearts of the whole command.

In these moves sixteen four-mule teams, with their huge wagons were obliged to make second trips in order to transfer all the tents, traps, and baggage of the officers. We were green troops then, and were near a city from which all our wants both real and imaginary, were readily supplied; not many months later, officers of the line were each allowed transportation for a small valise and nothing more; while field and staff were obliged to crowd their baggage, tents and all, into a single wagon.

It was at this camp I received my first detail as brigade field-officer of the day. The roster for this especial duty was usually made up from the field officers in the brigade who were not commanding regiments, but there being so few of that class present the names of two captains had been added. At the time I

regarded my being selected as one of the two, a compliment of which I had just reason to feel proud.

This detail came to me about ten o'clock Saturday evening, October 4. I was to report personally to General Piatt, at his head-quarters at nine o'clock the next morning, for instructions; and well do I remember with what pains I arrayed myself in my best suit, and how annoyed I was because of their being several wrinkles in the skirt of my coat that I could not stretch or rub out; and how my contraband almost wore the skin off his fingers polishing my sword-hilt, belt, buckles, and a huge pair of brass spurs I had borrowed for the occasion—for was I not to be mounted, and to have a staff officer and orderlies riding along the lines after me?

My horse and attendants were to be furnished at brigade head-quarters; and at the time appointed—to the very minute—I, with my new red sash spread out to its greatest width and arranged in regulation style over my shoulder and across my breast, made my appearance in front of head-quarters, where, after returning in a rather awkward manner the salute of the guard which had turned out on my approach, and of the polite orderly in front of the General's tent, I gently rapped, or rather scratched, the canvas, and was greeted with a "Walk in, sir," which almost made my teeth chatter. After the General had questioned me at considerable length as to the duties of the field officer of the day (I had been up half the night posting myself), and had instructed me in a most solemn manner in divers special rules which he had personally laid down for the government of *his* picket-line, and which he expected me to see rigidly enforced, I was turned over to his Assistant Adjutant-General, Captain Ben Piatt.

A few moments later, an orderly reported that a horse for the officer of the day was ready, and, saluting the General, I passed out, and was introduced by Captain Piatt to Lieutenant Riveroak Piatt, one of the General's aids, who, accompanied by two well-mounted orderlies, sat on his magnificent charger, and with a very polite bow, announced himself in readiness to accompany me. Then I looked for the noble steed I was to ride, for I was a good horseman, and longed to show it; but my eyes rested on a yel-

low, raw-boned, lop-eared, rat-tailed nag, as homely a beast as I had ever seen. Turning my eyes, I noticed that all hands, except the General, were out of their tents looking at me, and without a word of comment I sprang to the saddle and plunged my spurs in the animal's ribs, expecting, of course, he would go off with a bound; but he hardly raised his head, and started off on a dog-trot, as much as to say, "Well, old fellow, if you think you can accomplish anything with those spurs, poke away."

At two P. M. the rounds had been made, and I was back at brigade head-quarters, where, the moment I dismounted, an orderly seized my animal's bridle and hurried him out of sight, evidently to prevent the General's learning of the joke. I afterward discovered it had been perpetrated by Lieutenant Worthington, a nephew and aid of the General's. How I got square with him will appear in due time.

We had not been in Camp Cromwell many days when we were made to realize that, even in the sunny South, and that long before the arrival of winter, "some days are dark and cheerless."

In my diary of that year, under date of October 12, I find written: "It is a cold, dreary night, a drizzling rain is falling, and a damp, cold wind whistles around my miserable old wall-tent, entering at every opening—and openings are numerous enough. My colored man, Jim Sailor, lies curled up under a pile of blankets in one corner, fast asleep. Evidently there is for him but little melody in the whistling wind, and what does he care now for the rain and cold. Sleep on, old fellow; whilst I draw my great coat and blanket closer about me, and try to write.

"I hear some one, with a coarse, rough voice, off in the other end of the regiment, trying to sing 'Home, Sweet Home.' He can hardly carry the tune, and evidently is singing for the purpose of convincing his tent-mates he is light-hearted. But there is a tremor in his harsh bawling which tells a tale his lips would not voluntarily utter. Now, other and more melodious voices have taken up the tune, and it swells out loud and clear. But they must cease. There goes 'tattoo,' and I hear my little orderly running up and down his street, shouting 'Turn out! turn

out!' Now he is calling the roll. There is no answer to some of their names; their owners—poor fellows—are out on picket, where they must remain all night in this chilling rain, without even a miserable tent to protect them."

But the following morning, October 13, broke clear and bright, and the weather, on the whole, during our stay about Washington, was very pleasant, and our soldiering there, when compared with our after experience, was indeed one grand holiday.

Colonel Ellis was a rather cold, harsh, ambitious man, and sometimes chilled us with his terrible bursts of profanity; but he was every inch a soldier. Broad-shouldered, long-limbed, dark-skinned, stood six feet plump, as trim as an arrow, and so straight that he seemed to bend backward; fine-featured, with thin, proud lips, a piercing eye, quick, easy movements—every word and act bespeaking consciousness of superiority and innate power. And in that indescribable soldierly quality, which—for want of a better term—we will call dash, he was unsurpassed by any officer in our corps. We loved our Major, but we were proud of our Colonel.

On Thursday afternoon, October 16, the regiment was out on drill. We had moved to a level field a mile or more from camp. Ellis was drilling us in the evolutions of the battalion, near a road, when there suddenly emerged from a piece of woods not far off, a cavalcade, which we rightly judged to be some of our general officers, with their staffs, on a tour of inspection. Upon seeing them, the colonel issued orders that were intended to bring us properly into line along one side of the road; but instead, when we came into position, the left of each company was just where its right should have been.

Ellis' dark face flushed. He evidently did not wish or intend to be caught in that plight; and riding hurriedly to the front of the leading company, he demanded of its commander, in a smothered shout and with an oath, "What brought his company in that plight?" receiving in answer to his inquiry, "Obedience to orders, sir."

Exasperated by this terse yet truthful reply, he immediately

issued, in the same suppressed voice, an order, prefaced with an epithet applied directly to this captain, which was not only unbecoming an officer or soldier, but one which no one, with a spark of manhood in him, takes coolly from friend or foe, underling or superior. And this officer, instead of obeying it, commanded his company to bring their guns to order; and, prepared to take the consequences, returned his sword to its scabbard.

You may, from a man's appearance, estimate very correctly the main points in his character; but an emergency frequently uncovers unsuspected weakness, or brings out unguessed strength. And just then the soldierly qualities in Colonel Ellis shot forth with dazzling brightness. In the lightning of that foul epithet the black cloud of passion spent its force. Before it had fairly escaped his lips, his quick mind saw his mistake, and the greatness that was in him sprang to the front.

Turning his head and raising his eyes, as if it were the first time he had seen these horsemen, he put spurs to his own fiery gray, dashed down the line to the centre, cried "Break ranks!" grasped the color-bearer by the shoulder, wheeled him about in the road, waved his sword to indicate the line, and shouted, "Rally on your colors!" and in another instant the passage was blocked by a firm line of levelled bayonets.

So sudden and unexpected was the movement, that these generals involuntarily jerked their horses back on their haunches, while their faces darkened with anger. But the next instant, before they could have reached us had they kept on at the gait they were coming, the road was again open, the regiment having made, on the double-quick, a left backward wheel. Then the cavalcade moved on; and before they had ridden the length of a company we received them at a present, at which these general officers, uncovering their heads and bowing—now with their faces expressive of approbation—rode past. A difficulty, which, under almost any other leader, would have resulted in no little trouble to both the Colonel and his subordinate, and possible disgrace to the whole regiment, was turned to the lasting advantage of all concerned. We could in no other way have made so favorable an

impression on our generals and their staff officers, a number of whom, that day, saw the regiment for the first time.

The American Guard were prouder than ever of the able soldier at their head, and even the officer who had been so wantonly abused forgot his insult in his admiration of the abilities of his chief; and it is worthy of note, that, from that day, Ellis indulged less frequently in profane or disrespectful language when addressing those under him.

CHAPTER III.

FROM MINERS' HILL TO FALMOUTH.

DURING our stay at Miners' Hill the regiment was drilled with greater regularity, and more hours per day, than at any other period of its existence.

On Thursday afternoon, October 16, Colonel Ellis manœuvred the battalion for over two hours at a double-quick; and when, at length, the welcome announcement, "That will do for to-day," was heard, there came with it the clatter of a horse's feet, and we saw, riding rapidly over the plain toward us, one of General Piatt's aids, who had been sent to look up our regiment, notify us that the brigade was to move that evening, and inform Colonel Ellis that the General desired him to return to camp forthwith and make the necessary preparations.

Then there came from the Colonel, in quick succession, the orders, "Fall in! Forward! Route step! Quick time! March!" and away we went, wondering what was up.

For a number of days we had been under what was termed light marching order; which meant, if it meant anything, that we might be sent off, at short notice, on some sort of an expedition, from which we were to return to the camp we then occupied, and at which everything was to be left, that could possibly be spared, which would in any way impede our progress. For, said the old soldiers, to march light means to move rapidly, and every ounce you carry soon seems a pound.

On reaching camp we learned that our sick, some thirty in number, had been ordered to Washington, and were informed that instead of going in light we were to move in heavy marching order. Now, that meant another thing altogether. We were now

to take everything, or rather, all the men could carry on their backs, and as much of the officers' baggage as could be packed in six or eight wagons; for all but that number were to be used for the transportation of ammunition and supplies, and there was to be no return for traps that were left.

At Park Barracks, New York City, we had taken our first lesson in that habit of almost criminal wastefulness universally practised in the Union armies. which not only cost the soldiers, individually, an amount of money that, in the aggregate, reached a fabulous sum, but unnecessarily added many millions to our national debt.

After partaking of a hastily prepared supper, we went to work with a will, and at sunset the men were sitting and lying around, with knapsacks packed, and haversacks and canteens filled, waiting for old "Strike tents," who made himself heard and was recognized without question about ten o'clock. Twenty minutes later our pretty little white canvas city at Miners' Hill was among the things that had been. The smaller dwellings were strapped fast to the knapsacks, ready to be slung on the backs of the men they had so recently sheltered. The larger habitations of the officers lay in rolls and shapeless heaps near where they, a few moments before, had stood, while the ground in all directions was strewn with mess-chests. camp-chairs, stoves, and various other articles of comfort and convenience, for the transportation of which forty wagons would hardly have been sufficient.

The company officers had thus far been furnished large wall-tents, but they had all been in use a long time, and were regarded as poor affairs; and the prospect of their being left behind for want of transportation, and of our getting better ones in their stead where we were going, was commented on very favorably by all. With what a different feeling they would have been parted with had we known that during all our future wanderings up and down through Virginia and Maryland, but few of us would ever again be sheltered by anything half as good.

Everything that was to be carried on the person was soon in readiness, and we were walking and lying around among the ruins

of Camp Cromwell, momentarily expecting the order to "Fall in." One, two, three hours passed; it did not come, but in its stead came rain. Some fastened their pieces of shelter-tents together, threw them over tent-poles which had been left standing, and crawled under; others simply wrapped their rubber blankets about their shoulders; and yet others built large fires, and huddled around them; while a few, without even unstrapping blankets, threw themselves down alongside their traps. And thus we passed a long, dreary night, listening for the bugle-call and wistfully waiting for daylight.

Early Friday morning we learned that Whipple's division had orders to join the main army, which was then lying on the Maryland side of the Potomac, in the vicinity of Harper's Ferry.

Two days before our arrival at Miners' Hill, General McClellan had left Washington, preceded by the bulk of his army, with instructions to drive the enemy from Maryland. Not many days later we were shocked by reports of the traitorous conduct of Colonel Miles, in what was said to be an unnecessary surrender to the enemy of nearly twelve thousand Federal soldiers and a vast amount of Government stores at Harper's Ferry. Then came conflicting reports and rumors of the engagement at South Mountain, and the terrible battle at Antietam, at which—let history award the victory to this side or that—it was even then acknowledged that the Union loss in killed and wounded exceeded twelve thousand men. And now, it was said, McClellan had been peremptorily ordered to again move forward, give battle to the enemy, and drive him further south; and that our division was but a portion of the force that was being hurried forward to fill the gaps made at Harper's Ferry and Antietam.

At six o'clock the long-looked-for order came; and without waiting to finish our breakfast, which we were at the time eating, we hastily gathered up our traps, hurried into line, and started off at a rapid gait toward Washington. A drizzling rain was falling; the air was muggy; our wet blankets made heavy loads; the mud was deep, and ever and anon, as we plodded along, a

man gave out and was left alongside the road to be picked up by the ambulances which were following in our wake.

At eleven o'clock we were halted for a few hours' rest near the entrance to the aqueduct bridge, opposite Georgetown. At noon the sun came out warm and bright, and the men soon covered every fence and grass-plat in the vicinity with their wet blankets. About four P. M. we moved over the bridge, marched through Georgetown into Washington, and halted in front of the Capitol, where we squatted in the street until ten o'clock, when we moved to the depot. After waiting there two hours longer, a train of freight and cattle cars was got ready, and as the clocks of the city were striking the midnight hour, our engine tooted "Off breaks," and we were soon thundering along through the gloom.

At the end of a most uncomfortable eleven hours' ride, we found ourselves at Knoxville, a small village in Maryland, some eight miles east from Harper's Ferry. On alighting from the cars we were conducted a short distance to a steep, open side-hill, where, after stretching ourselves, and partaking of some "hard tack" and coffee, we drove in the ground whatever came handy to rest our feet against, that we might not slide down, threw ourselves on the grass, and, basking in the sun, took a view of what was below, in front, and around us.

The scene was, indeed, a grand one. At our feet was a dilapidated but picturesque village, with two rather extensive cotton factories; but we listened in vain for

"The whirr and worry of spindles and of looms,"

for the great wheels had ceased toiling

"Amid the hurry and rushing of the flumes."

Just beyond the factories ran the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal; and, a little further on, the Potomac came, winding its way through the mountains; along the sides of which, to their very tops, could be seen, through openings in the foliage, the white tents of regiments which had preceded us. But, high above all, wheeling to and fro through the air, were scores of turkey-buzzards, waiting for their meal of putrid flesh; and the ugly thought, Is it to be

brute or human? swept down upon and destroyed the whole brood of pleasant emotions awakened by the beauty of the scene below. We were stiff, and sore, and tired after our long, sleepless ride in the cars, and retired early and slept very soundly that night, rolled in our woollen and rubber blankets, lying on our side-hill beds.

Our division had ceased to belong to the Army of Defence, whose principal duties were to hold, under the immediate eyes of the President and of the Secretary of War, the line of works which encircled the National Capital; and we were now fairly in the field and permanently incorporated with the Army of the Potomac.

Sunday afternoon, October 19, our brigade moved about three miles, and encamped in a large field on the farm of a crusty old "secesh," who, not satisfied with having guards placed over all his movable property, objected even to our drawing the cool water from his well. The men of our regiment, while they failed to discover by what rule of justice they were deprived of the privilege of drawing water from a well located on the premises of an enemy of their country, simply because that enemy, in the bitter meanness of his little soul, didn't wish them to have it, as a general thing said but little, and quenched their thirst from a muddy stream. Not so with the older soldiers of the other regiments. They cursed the guards and the general who had placed them there, and swore they would get even with the owner before they departed from his broad acres.

Before we left Knoxville that morning, the strictest kind of orders against trespassing and foraging had been read to each of our regiments, and when taps ceased that night, not a man, save those on duty, was to be seen about our camps. But had any one, possessed of an acute sense of smell, chanced to walk through the brigade just after midnight, he might have detected, especially in the camp of the 86th, what appeared to be the savor of roasting mutton; had he walked on into the camp of the Pennsylvanians, the air might have seemed to be impregnated with the smell of burning feathers; and, as to the Ohio boys—well, there was a

rumor at the time that in the dead hours of night the air was rent by a piercing squeal, which terminated in a terrible gurgling sound. What this hideous noise was no one ever knew, but it certainly came right out from between the guns of that battery.

Monday afternoon we left the grounds of this old chap, mutually disgusted with each other, and marched off some two and a half miles to a more congenial spot near Burkettsville, where we spent several happy days. The farmers from round about brought us apples and potatoes, and even pies and milk, which they sold at reasonable rates; and as a few "greenbacks" and "shinplasters" yet remained with the men, they lived for the day, taking no thought for the morrow. Here, too, the country was well stocked with game, and roast bird and rabbit stew were not unknown luxuries.

Captain Travis, who was then our quartermaster's sergeant, tells me that while the regiment lay at this camp, he and a certain lieutenant procured shot-guns from a friendly farmer, and started out early one morning in quest of birds for a game dinner. About a mile from camp they entered the woods at the foot of the mountain and began clambering up the sides. "Presently," says the captain, "we discovered, bobbing about on a plateau just ahead of us, an immense flock of wild turkeys, and creeping cautiously up, so that we could get a good range, we blazed away both together, and as the flock raised we let them have the contents of our second barrels. Then we moved out and picked up six fine black fellows, and tying their feet together, we shouldered our guns, slung our birds over them, and hastened back to camp, as proud as cuffies. We knew Colonel Ellis was exceedingly fond of wild game, and concluded to select the largest pair and present them to him. On entering the Colonel's tent I found him busy writing, and without saying a word I laid the birds down beside him and walked quietly out; but before I was twenty feet away I heard him shout, 'Come back here!' On reëntering the tent he looked first at me and then at the birds, and asked, 'Travis, what —— does this mean?' 'Well, Colonel,' said I, 'we had good luck this morning—captured half a dozen wild turkeys, and—'

'Wild turkeys! wild turkeys! Turkey-buzzards, you ——! Take away the carrion!' he shouted."

South Mountain battle-ground was not far away, and one day several of us visited it. Nearly two thousand Federal soldiers were wounded, and General Reno and about four hundred others had been killed there on the 14th of September. Arriving on the field we came to a board fence near a road. This fence was pierced full of bullet-holes; in some places they were so close together we covered seven and eight at a time with the palm of one hand.

The Federal battle-line must have stood just behind this fence, for the graves of our men were thickest there; and pieces of cracker-boxes, with the names of those who slept beneath them written, sometimes in ink, sometimes with pencil, and occasionally roughly cut in, were sticking from the ground in all directions. But all the mounds we saw that day did not cover the bodies of Union soldiers. Getting over the fence, and moving across an open space into a piece of woods, we came to the graves of our enemies—not so thick, but spreading over a larger space. It was not a pleasant sight, that battle-field, with its new-made graves. The thoughts it awakened were not of a kind we loved to dwell upon, and our return to camp was a gloomy walk, devoid of the mirth and jokes which enlivened our journey over.

When our division left Miners' Hill, its wagon trains were started across the country. During the trip quite a number of wagons broke down, and some of them were left along the route. Friday morning, October 24, we had a division drill, and in the afternoon Sergeant Travis came riding through our camp on a rather smooth-looking, but wonderfully long-eared mule, and notified us he had just received orders to "dump" all the company officers' mess-chests, and turn over the wagons in which they were carried to the ammunition and supply train. Company A's officers had paid fifty dollars for their mess-chest and its contents; but it was not a dead loss, for we succeeded in trading the whole kit to a crippled Virginia Yankee for a pair of very lean fowls, which I have no doubt he stole from some neighbor, who charged

the theft to the Union soldiers. We were satisfied, in that we had done the very best we could under the circumstances; but I am inclined to think the old fellow grieved some over his part of the transaction, for when our brigade moved off they left him a score of similar chests without demanding a simple thank you, and he might have had ours at the same price.

While at supper that evening we received marching orders, and at half-past nine left this land of milk and honey, and marched, with an occasional short halt, until midnight, when we bivouacked near Berlin, a station of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, on the banks of the Potomac, across which a pontoon bridge was being laid.

This bridge was made of sixty-two scow-built boats, anchored some twenty feet apart, and connected by large beams, across which were laid strong planks. It took the place of a costly structure which had not long before been destroyed by Stonewall Jackson's troops, and of which nothing now remained save a long line of massive stone piers. These formed, as they towered in bold relief from the rippling waters, striking monuments of the terrible devastation of that civil war which, ere it terminated, was to shake our social system to its very foundation, rob our country of hundreds of thousands of her noblest sons, and bring the whole people to the very verge, while it hurled thousands over, the precipice of financial distress, bankruptcy, and despair, and burdened their children with a monstrous public debt, which must for long years turn back the tide of emigration, and press the hitherto swift-running wheels of our national prosperity deep down into the ruts and stiff mud through which many of the old nations of Europe had long been toiling.

As soon as this bridge of boats was completed Pleasonton's cavalry dashed across, followed by our entire army, which was then over a hundred thousand strong. From Saturday morning until five o'clock Sunday afternoon they moved past us, infantry after artillery and artillery after infantry, in one unbroken stream. Then our turn came, and in a drenching storm we crossed over; and once more polluted Virginia's sacred mud, which was ankle

deep. A cold, disagreeable march of three miles brought us to Lovettsville, where we halted in a muddy corn-field, not far from the scene of Tuesday's skirmish, early enough to admit of the men getting up their shelters before darkness set in.

Our wagons did not come up that night, and nearly all the officers—Ellis, Cummins, and Cromwell among the number—lay down on the muddy ground without any protection save their wet blankets. The rain continued and the wind increased, blowing down most of the tents the men had put up; but all were thoroughly soaked before they turned in, and it really mattered but little whether their tents were up or down. About midnight the rain ceased falling, but the wind blew up fiercer and stronger than ever, and before morning we all realized to the fullest extent what actual suffering was—wet to the skin, standing or lying in the mud and water, no fires, a violent wind piercing us through and through. When the sick call was sounded the next morning some thirty of our number were found to be unfit for duty, and were packed in ambulances and sent back to a hospital which had been established at Berlin.

We remained in the vicinity of Lovettsville until nine o'clock Thursday morning, October 30, when, with three days' cooked rations in our haversacks, we started off on a road which "intelligent contrabands" informed us led to Winchester. After marching about eight miles we bivouacked near Hillsborough. On the the march we passed a squad of prisoners. They were the first "Johnnies" many of our boys had ever seen, and consequently attracted considerable attention. Our division remained in the vicinity of Hillsborough until one o'clock Sunday afternoon, November 2, when we resumed our march, advanced twelve miles, and pitched our tents for the night near Snicker's Gap.

For several days there had been frequent skirmishes between McClellan's advance and the enemy's rear-guard; and on Saturday, while lying at Hillsborough, we were entertained for several hours by the incessant booming of artillery, a weird sort of music with which we had not yet become very familiar. The enemy was evidently either falling back or being driven before our advance.

On the afternoon of the 3d we moved forward about five miles, and bivouacked near a cluster of buildings called Bloomfield. There was no infantry force moving ahead of our brigade that day, and when midway of our march a heavy cloud of dust suddenly arose about half a mile to our right, and nearly parallel with the head of our column, General Piatt, supposing it was caused by a body of the enemy's cavalry, ordered a halt, hurried us into battle line, and sent forward several mounted men to reconnoitre. Then the order "Load at will—load," was given, and obeyed, after which, save the slight noise made by the occasional smiting together of a pair of weak knees, we stood in perfect silence awaiting the result. Presently the mounted men came jogging their horses back, and informed the General it was simply another column of our troops moving on another road. This report suddenly loosened every tongue, and as we continued our march, those who, a few moments before, had been trembling at the prospect of a fight, told of the mighty valorous deeds they would have performed had the foe actually appeared in front of them. But they were soon ridiculed into silence by comrades, who began jotting down the names of the loud talkers under such headings as "A correct list of members of the 124th who skedaddled the first time a bullet whistled within ten feet of their empty heads," or advised them to throw away their guns and get their tongues ground to a point.

There had been quite a lively cavalry skirmish at Bloomfield the day before we arrived, in which the rebels had been worsted; and their friends—especially the females—in the village, were outspoken and very bitter in their denunciations of the "nigger-loving Yankees."

On the 4th we moved some six miles to Upperville, and bivouacked on grounds where the camp-fires of the enemy, who had been there the night before, were yet smouldering. Wednesday, the 5th, Whipple's division had the advance again, and left Upperville about nine A. M. At two P. M., having marched twelve miles, we halted near the village of Piedmont, where the regiment unslung knapsacks, and after a breathing spell of some thirty

minutes, started off in light marching order for Manassas Gap, which was yet ten miles distant.'

Just after dark our brigade reached the foot of the mountain, where we were ordered to throw out a light line of pickets, and sleep on our arms. The enemy was close at hand, and we were not permitted to build fires, though it was a bitter cold night. During the afternoon rain had fallen at intervals, our clothes were wet, and as our blankets as well as tents had been left behind, we suffered terribly. We had certainly moved in light marching order, for we were not only without tents and blankets, but our haversacks were empty, many having eaten their last "hard tack" before we left Piedmont. Officers and men were all in the same boat this time; no one had anything to put in his empty stomach or on his shivering frame. To sleep was to freeze, and we spent the night running back and forth, jumping and stamping our feet, thrashing our chilled bodies with our benumbed arms, blowing our fingers and slapping our naked hands. Slowly the hours wore by, and as morning approached many began to feel within them the gnawings of hunger. I remember one of my men finding in his haversack a piece of dry, raw salt pork, about the size of a silver dollar. He cut it in two and gave me half; and ah! what a sweet morsel it was; never before had I tasted anything which gave me half the satisfaction I derived from eating that piece of pork.

At an early hour the next morning we resumed our march, and had gone but a short distance when we were joined by Captain Clark, with a portion of Company I. This company had not moved with the regiment for a number of days, having been detailed as provost-guard for the division; but during the night the captain had learned that the regiment was off on what it was hoped would be a successful expedition, and not wishing to lose any of the prospective glory, obtained permission to follow us. He left Piedmont about three o'clock in the morning with some forty of his men, and after a forced march of eleven miles (division head-quarters was a mile in rear of the point the regiment had started from), they, without even a halt, took their regular position in the line; and breakfastless we, in single file,

began climbing up the side of the mountain, ever and anon lending a helping hand to some artillery-men who were hauling along with us two light long-range guns.

At ten A. M. we were on the summit of a peak of the Blue Ridge, looking off on a landscape of peculiar beauty. The guns referred to were kept near the head of our column, and the moment the men of our leading company were able to look over into the valley beyond, the artillery-men hurried their pieces into position; seeing which, Major Cromwell, who, with the centre companies of the regiment, was yet some distance down the mountain, hurried Companies C and H into line for a charge, supposing the guns to belong to the enemy; and it was several minutes before he could be assured to the contrary. As Company K reached the crest, Captain Jackson, enraptured with the scene, involuntarily threw up his hands, and turning to Ellis, cried out, "Grand! Magnificent!" But the Colonel, who was sweeping the surrounding peaks with his glass, replied only with a sharp "Get your company into line, captain," and turning leisurely to the commander of the guns, pointed to a clump of trees not far away, with the remark, "A grand place for a masked battery—look out for yourselves."

There at our feet, or rather away down below us, stretching off for miles and miles, was the fertile valley of the Shenandoah, with its little serpentine river threading a course along through its centre. The shores of the river were dotted here and there with little clusters of buildings, from several of which single church spires glistened in the morning sun. Near the foot of the mountain were groups of white tents, in which dwelt squads of the enemy's cavalry. To drop down among them a few shells from our long-range guns, was but the work of a moment. It was like throwing stones in hornets' nests. They didn't stop to

> "——— fold their tents like the Arabs,
> And as silently steal away,"

but at the very first shell, which burst right among them, they mounted their saddled steeds and dashed away in every direction, as if "Old Nick" was just behind them.

The object of our movement had been to get around in rear and cut off the retreat of a force of the enemy's infantry stationed in the gap; but they had got word of our intentions and retired long before we reached the top of the mountain. We, however, completed the circuit by moving down the opposite side and back through the gap, exchanging occasionally, as we went, a few random shots with their scouts. At six P. M. we halted again on the site of our former night's bivouac.

In the meantime other troops had moved in and taken possession of the gap, and we were ordered to return to Piedmont. After resting a few moments we started off—oh! how tired and hungry. We had not gone far when we were gladdened by the sight of Sergeant Travis and his mule, for we were sure a wagon with food was close at hand. After halting just long enough to draw our rations and cook some coffee, we resumed our march, moving at quick time all the way. It was past midnight when we reached our knapsacks, but once there blankets were soon unrolled, and before many minutes had passed the ground was covered with sleeping men. When we awoke next morning there was spread over us all a white blanket of snow.

During the forenoon (November 7) all of our men who had given out on our return march the night before, rejoined the regiment, and at three P. M. we were moving forward again. After a march of five miles we halted in a piece of woods near Salem. It had stormed all day, and we were obliged to clear away the snow before pitching our tents. Everything was wet; the cold air chilled us, and we passed a sleepless and most dreary night. At eight o'clock next morning we were off again; pushed on, with but one or two rests, until two P. M., when we reached and were halted at Orleans. For a number of days our principal diet had been hard bread, and short rations at that, and so thoroughly exhausted were many of our men at the end of that day's march, that they truthfully expressed themselves as caring but little whether the following morning found them dead or alive.

We remained at Orleans three days. It was during this halt that General George B. McClellan was removed from, and Am-

brose E. Burnside assigned to, the command of the Army of the Potomac.

On the 10th, Colonel Cummings went out, with a small squad of men, on a foraging expedition, and brought in twenty-three sheep and a bull. The sheep were soon dressed, and issued to the regiment. The bull was tied to one of the supply wagons over-night, for we were to move at an early hour in the morning, and it was thought best to keep and kill him at the end of our next day's march; but he roared, and tore up the ground, and pulled the wagon around to such an extent that night, that somebody deemed it expedient to cut his lordship loose, and at an early hour in the morning he elevated his tail, shook, and then lowered, his head between his fore-legs, gave us a farewell roar, and struck a bee-line for his home, or some other place, carrying away, as he bounded through the neighboring camps, a dozen or more tents—the feelings of the occupants, at being so unceremoniously aroused from their morning slumbers, can better be imagined than described.

On the 11th we moved forward about six miles, and encamped near Waterloo. On the evening of the 15th, a body of the enemy's scouts made a dash at, or accidentally ran into our pickets, striking the line at a point where the detail from the 122d Pennsylvania was joined by that of the 124th New York, which consisted of twenty men under command of Lieutenant W. E. Weygant of Company B. Just what occurred I was not at the time, nor have I since, been able to learn. The result was the loss of three of their own men, and the capture of three Confederates by the Pennsylvanians, while Lieutenant Weygant and his men, without loss on their part, captured and brought in two of the enemy.

At five o'clock on the morning of the 16th we started again, but instead of moving to the front, changed direction to the left, and at the end of a four hours' march, found ourselves at Warrenton, where Whipple's command joined, and became a part of, Hooker's Grand Divsiion.

Warrenton was one of the largest villages we had passed through since our entry into Virginia. It was the county-seat

of Fauquier county, and had evidently been a place of no small pretensions. Its public buildings—consisting of a court-house and three churches—had all been rather imposing structures, but they were then almost in ruins, and showed evident marks of recent vandalism. A number of dwellings, and two large tents which were yet standing, had been used by the enemy as hospitals, and were found by Pleasonton's men, who, a few days before our arrival, had entered the place at the heels of a body of retreating Confederates—filled with the enemy's sick and wounded.

We were routed up on the 17th at three o'clock in the morning, and ordered to get breakfast and be ready to move at a moment's notice. And at half-past five, in a heavy storm and amid almost total darkness, we resumed our onward march. At two P. M. we bivouacked in an open field, near a cluster of buildings called Liberty, or Libertyville, where we spent the remainder of that day and the following night.

On our arrival at this place, Captain Clark, whose company was yet on duty as provost-guard for our division, took possession of a large stack of straw, and detailed a squad of his men to guard it. During the afternoon all of this straw that was required at General Whipple's head-quarters was carried thither, and yet by far the greater part remained in charge of the guard, who had received explicit orders not to allow any one to take an armful who did not present a written order for the same, signed by the captain.

The rain did not for a moment cease falling, and darkness set in at an unusually early hour. About seven o'clock a small body of men from the 1st New York made a raid on this straw stack; but the captain happened to be there at the time and they were soon driven off. An hour later they returned in greater numbers, and undertook to overpower the guard, when Captain Clark drew his revolver and shot one of their number, inflicting a severe wound; whereupon the whole party, swearing vengeance, rushed at the captain, and compelled him to flee for his life. Favored by the darkness he managed to elude his pursuers, and succeeded in escaping to division head-quarters, where he was concealed for the night. The following morning charges were preferred against

him, and he was placed under arrest. A few days later he was tried and acquitted. Captain Clark subsequently informed me he had been instructed by General Whipple to place a strong guard over this straw, and to issue it only to the sick, who were hourly arriving at our division field hospital which had been established near by.

On the 18th we pushed on again through the mud and rain, making about twelve miles, and halting, just before dark, near Hartwood church. This was in many respects the severest march we had made—all were exhausted and as wet as the rain could make us. At nearly every halt those who wore boots pulled them off and poured the water out of them, and the moment the order "break ranks" was given, the men threw themselves on the wet ground, and had they been permitted most of them would have laid there until morning without putting up tents, building fires, or cooking any food, and not a few of them did lay in that condition until daylight. So far as my own company was concerned, by coaxing some and driving others, I succeeded in getting all our tents up, good fires burning and coffee boiling. After which I threw myself down on some pine twigs, under a little shelter tent, to await the preparation of my supper. Before it was ready an order came for Company A to strike tents and get ready for picket. It was hard, but there was no alternative. Hastily swallowing their half-boiled coffee, and eating a little hard bread, the poor fellows wrung all the weight of water they could from their blankets, pulled down and rolled their tents, and huddled around the fires, waiting for the order to fall in. After standing in the rain two long hours, the order was countermanded, and we were again permitted to unpack and put up our tents.

A hundred thousand Union soldiers lay on the wet ground, in their wet clothes, under their wet blankets, and shivered the dark hours away. There are no records which show the number of men lost to our army by that night's exposure, but many a battle, called severe, cost not half the number.

On the 19th we succeeded in making our way, through the rain and hourly deepening mud, a distance of about six miles,

when the bottom seemed to drop entirely out of the roads, and the artillery and wagon trains sank so deep they could be moved no further, and we were ordered to pitch our tents for the night. The storm continued with unabated fury throughout the 20th and 21st, but the roads were in the meantime corduroyed, and at nine o'clock on the 22d we struck tents, and again waded forward through the mud. At seven P. M. we had made five miles. On the 23d we waded yet another five miles, and were halted about two miles from Falmouth, and within four miles of Fredericksburg. On the following morning we moved a few rods to some high ground, where, after clearing away some brush, we laid out a color line and company streets; and, for the first time since leaving Miner's Hill, went regularly into camp.

At noon that day our tents were all up in regulation style, and everything about camp was in order; but how slight was the resemblance it bore to our pleasant little city at Camp Cromwell. There the surrounding fields were carpeted with grass; here they were covered with a thick coating of slimy, sticky mud. There all the officers were in convenient wall tents, and the shelter tents of the men were clean and white; here line officers and private soldiers crawled under the same kind of dirty shelters. There was not a tent in the regiment, save the three or four occupied by our field and staff, in which a man could stand erect.

On the 25th our corps—the 3d, which, since the reorganization of the army by General Burnside had been commanded by General Stoneman—was reviewed by General Hooker, whose command consisted of it and the 5th corps.

On the following morning we resumed our usual camp duties, the routine differing but little from what it had been at Miners' Hill, except that our drills were less severe, and that our picket tours were of three days' instead of twenty-four hours' duration.

During the following two weeks the regiment changed camp several times, but did not get half a mile away from the spot where we pitched our tents on the 24th. Those little wedge-shaped shelters, only four feet high from the ground to ridge pole, did very well for summer, but made most miserable dwellings for winter

weather. Personally, however, I had little to complain of, on that score, having been detailed, immediately on our arrival there, as Brigade Provost-marshal, and ordered to report at General Piatt's head-quarters, where I was furnished with a new wall tent, in which I spent most of my leisure time until the army went into winter quarters.

CHAPTER IV.

AT FREDERICKSBURG.

THE plan of operations against the Confederate capital, adopted by General Burnside on his taking command of the Army of the Potomac, was evidently based on the belief that, by pushing his forces rapidly down the north-east bank of the Rappahannock, he would be able to cross that river at Fredericksburg, and get well on his way toward, if he did actually reach Richmond before General Lee would be able to concentrate in front of him a sufficient force with which to offer any very serious resistance.

And this might perhaps have been accomplished, notwithstanding the muddy roads and the inclemency of the weather, but for the inexplicable delay of our pontoon trains, which did not arrive until the 10th of December.

This delay of nearly three weeks gave General Lee ample time to thoroughly intrench and fortify a hitherto almost untenable position on the bluffs in rear of Fredericksburg; and enabled him to concentrate behind and around those works a force of at least eighty thousand of the very best troops in the Confederacy, by far the greater part of which, when Burnside's advance appeared on the heights in front of Fredericksburg, were from eight to twelve days' march away—Stonewall Jackson and his thirty odd thousand being at Winchester, nearly a hundred miles distant.

Considering the changed circumstances of the enemy, and the lateness of the season, when at length the pontoons did arrive, it would seem the Army of the Potomac should have been allowed to settle quietly down in winter quarters, and all further demonstrations in that quarter deferred until the opening of spring.

But the "powers that were" thought differently, or rather,

I perhaps should say, were unable to resist the cry of "Onward to Richmond," which came up with great persistency from a host of unprincipled politicians and capitalists of the North—a body of men who, though actually becoming richer as the necessities of their country increased, with great pomp and ceremony claimed to be furnishing the Government from their own private pockets with what they termed *the very sinews of war*; a noble work which they to this day would have the people believe was a grander thing than the taking of one's life in his own hands and deliberately laying it on the altar of his country.

But let the cause and responsibility of that inauspicious movement be what, and rest where, it may, it is certain that, immediately on the arrival of the pontoons, orders preliminary to a general movement were issued; and, about eight o'clock A. M. on the 11th of December, our brigade, having that morning piled their knapsacks in tents left standing for that purpose at their camp near Falmouth, marched off to, and halted behind, a long line of bluffs called Stafford Heights, which, a little further on, formed the northern bank of the Rappahannock and overlooked the city of Fredericksburg.

Here they stacked arms and lay down to await the completion of a pontoon bridge which our engineers had, during the night, pushed two-thirds of the way across the river, and were that morning, assisted by the 7th Michigan and some Massachusetts regiments, endeavoring to finish, under a most destructive fire from the rebel General Barksdale's Mississippi sharp-shooters, who were posted on the opposite shore. This fire ever and anon became so terrific as to drive our bridge-builders from their work, and they would come rushing up over the edge of the bluff, dragging their wounded and dying with them, but only to reform and be reinforced; when they would dash down again, grasping the timbers as they went; push out another boat; withstand again, for a few moments, the ceaseless shower of bullets; lay a few more planks, which as they fell were frequently just in time to catch the bleeding, staggering forms of the men who had borne them.

And thus this floating blood-stained bridge was pushed out toward the hostile shore, bringing its resolute builders nearer and yet nearer their hidden foes; until at last, about noon, it became impossible to gain another foot. It was in vain they grasped the timbers and rushed forward, they could no longer reach the unfinished end; before they were half across, timbers and men went down in a heap together on the planks already laid, or staggering to the edge, toppled over into the stream.

Along the entire front of the city—from behind every fence and out of every window and door-way—came the powder flash that hurled death's messengers among them.

At length forbearance ceased to be a virtue, even where a city was at stake. All of a sudden the earth trembled and the air was rent with a noise that cannot be described.

The long line of a hundred and twenty huge guns, which covered Stafford Heights, as of one accord shot forth their tongues of fire, and raised their horrid voices in protest of this wanton slaughter; and for hours these terrible thundering monsters belched forth their fire and smoke, and hurled their whizzing shot and screeching shell right into the doomed city, crushing down their hiding-places on the heads of the concealed foe.

The bluffs disappeared; and in their stead was a long line of puffing, curling smoke, filled with weird-looking forms of moving men, and lit up continually by ever changing flashes of shooting flame. The river, too, faded from our sight, and the crumbling city gradually disappeared under thick black clouds of powder smoke; from beneath which could be heard, amid the ceaseless roar of cannon, the irregular rattle of musketry, the boom of falling timbers, the crash of shot and shell, and the shouts and yells of contending troops.

At length the cannonade ceased, the smoke raised a little, and lo! two bridges spanned the river, filled with columns of Union troops, who were hurrying across into the battered city, which was not yet entirely cleared of the enemy, though our infantry crossing in boats under cover of the smoke, had successfully, driven them from the river front. Away up the streets

little clouds of white curling smoke could be seen puffing from behind buildings and out of door-ways; while the rattle of musketry seemed to increase as the heavier noises died away.

But steadily, though slowly, our heavy, broken lines of skirmishers pushed on from street to street, until at eight P. M. the last of the stubborn foe were driven beyond its limits; when the firing gradually ceased, and soon the two vast armies slept. It is said we lost over three hundred men laying that double bridge, and as many more in driving the foe from the city. This, however, was but a side show. The main battle had not yet commenced.

Friday morning a dense fog, thicker than Thursday's smoke, hid the landscape from view; and not far away and all around us we could hear the clattering of unseen artillery and the mingling of numerous voices directing the movements of unseen troops. While still nearer, dim outlines of moving columns could be seen through the mist. Occasionally this dense fog would lift a little, but never enough to admit of our discovering what was taking place beyond the river.

About ten o'clock we fell in with the moving mass, and crept along the road and down the side of the bluff to the bridge, halting a short time on the shore; then, moving a few inches at a time, we began to cross. But before half the regiment was on the bridge, the passage-way on the opposite shore became so completely blocked that we could move no farther, and were standing there, quietly talking with one another, when the fog lifted a little, and uncovered us to the view of the enemy's artillerists, who forthwith opened on us one of their batteries. Fortunately the range was at first a little high, and the whizzing, hissing shells passed harmlessly over our heads and plunged into the water beyond.

But they had no idea of wasting their ammunition, and immediately began correcting their range. Then the shells fell in the water above us, but very near the bridge, which was becoming decidedly uncomfortable. "The next time, they will fetch us," cried a voice just ahead of me; and sure enough the next shell struck in the regiment in front of us, very near where the voice came from, and I did not hear any one shout, "I told you so."

Then came the order to "right about," and we were hurried to the shore, where we threw ourselves on the ground; but after a moment or two fell in line again and moved out of range.

The regiment which stood on the bridge ahead of us had two men killed and several wounded, but fortunately none of the 124th were injured. This was the first time our regiment had actually been under fire, and with but one or two exceptions, there was no cause for censure of officer or man. When a shell passed very near the tops of our heads, we may have stooped a little, that was all—brave old soldiers did the same. But some of our contrabands behaved badly—*very badly indeed.*

When the regiment left Goshen, I took with me as servant a colored man from Newburgh, named James Sailor. A short time before the army reached Falmouth, Jim left my employ, and hired with Major Cromwell. When the order to lie down was given, after we came off the bridge, the major dismounted, and called for Jim to take his horse; but Jim did not respond, nor could he be found. Several saw him go on, but no one had seen him come off. It appears Jim went on the bridge in company with the contrabands of the regiment which preceded us, and when that shell struck among them, he become totally demoralized, and, unable to get off the bridge, got under it—that is, he slipped off the planks in the end of one of the pontoons, and finding it half full of water, stretched out and braced his hands and feet against the sides of the boat, so as to keep himself above the water, and crawled under the planking.

As the major stood holding his horse, wondering what had become of Jim, an old man, who lay on the shore—one of the 86th, I think—sprang to his feet, grasping as he did so a good-sized stone, and regardless of bursting shells, which were yet raining around the bridge, rushed forward and "tiptoed" out to over where Jim was, when he raised the stone above his head, dashed it down on the planks, and hurried back to the shore. As the stone struck the bridge, there was a splash in the water, and the next minute out crawled Jim, shaking like a leaf, his teeth chattering, the cold water dripping from every part of him—the

worst frightened and most sorry-looking colored gent I had ever seen.

Company A's officers had with them a little black, shining, faced fellow named Jack Smith. Now Jack was a rather proud and very logical chap, made the very best biscuits, said he had seen some service, and claimed to possess a large share of that admirable soldierly quality called bravery.

As we stood on the bridge just before the shelling commenced, I called Jack to me and asked for my canteen and haversack, for I mistrusted that if we should get into any trouble, Jack might not be on hand when I needed him; but the little fellow seemed so hurt by my apparent distrust, and protested so strongly, saying, "I'se bin in fights afore, and don't want to see massa captain toteing his own grub, and dis little nigger loafin' 'long doin' noffin; s'pose you done gone get wounded, don't you 'spec' me dar to took care on you? You needn't gone git afeerd I'se gwine to runn'd away from you; no sah, massa captain, I'll stay wid you." So I left my haversack with Jack; taking only one of the three canteens he had strung about his shoulder. But the moment the shells began to fall, Jack disappeared; and as we about faced, I caught a glimpse of the little scamp just straightening himself up on the top of the bank, and the next instant he bounded off like a deer, the haversack and canteens seeming to stand right out behind him. It is needless to say I never tasted the contents of that haversack. No other troops attempted to cross the river at that point during the day, and toward evening we moved off to a damp, muddy flat, where we shivered the night away.

At six o'clock next morning we returned to the river, and, unmolested, crossed the bridge and lay down on a level strip of ground a few rods up from the southern shore, and under cover of a steep bank. Here we remained two or three hours, watching through the mist the quiet crossing of unbroken columns of our troops. The crackling of musketry had ceased; the artillery was quiet, and the only unusual noise that reached us was the distant rumbling of moving trains. But this quiet was that which precedes the storm.

About ten o'clock the sun broke through, dispelling the mist, which seemed to be a preconcerted signal for the opening of the battle. As the sky cleared, the guns on the opposing heights opened with terrible fury : while from the left came the crackling of musketry, which increased suddenly to heavy prolonged volleys, and ere long settled into a continuous roar that spread along the front and soon seemed to come from every direction, telling that the work of death had begun in earnest. Again the long line of guns on Stafford Heights, now in our rear, and at first in full view, disappeared beneath clouds of fire-lit smoke, while the air above seemed filled with shot and shell.

About two P. M. orders came for our brigade to storm a battery on the heights beyond us. The 86th and 122d were ordered to move on the flanks, and the 124th to attack in front. In a few moments we were hurrying over the flats to a position where we had been ordered to form for the charge; but before we reached it, our brigadier, in attempting to force his horse over a ditch, fell in, and was so badly injured that he had to be carried to the rear.

Arriving at the point designated, and forming line as directed, we lay down awaiting the order to charge. But, fortunately for the Orange Blossoms, it never came. Our time was not yet. Other fields were to test our valor and drink our blood ; but this time other troops were to do and die while we lay looking on.

All day the battle raged and the deafening roar continued; but as night came on it gradually slackened, and finally almost entirely ceased. At dusk we were yet lying on the ground in front of the enemy's batteries. As soon as it was dark, we threw out pickets, and then again shivered the night away ; but no one complained.

At daybreak we moved back a short distance, behind some old buildings, where we quietly spent the Sabbath until four P. M., when we returned to the river bank, and were halted near an old mill, in which we found some flour. Starting up little fires, we cooked some coffee and baked some cakes. Not far off, a street ran through the village to the river near the bridge, down which

there poured a continuous stream of troops. They were not fresh men, moving into the city in close column with banners flying, but a vast procession of wounded, bleeding, dying men—in ambulances, on litters, in the arms of comrades, and some staggering along alone on foot, all hurrying away from the field.

Sunday evening came, the conflict had not been renewed, and just after dark we were ordered out on picket, and again moved over the plain to within four hundred yards of the enemy's works, where we once more threw ourselves down on the wet, muddy ground. All night we could hear the peculiar noise of moving artillery, which seemed to be coming up from the river and going into position all around us.

Just after midnight the moon came out, but the air was thick with smoke. At two o'clock our line was driven back a short distance. About four o'clock it clouded up again, and rain began to fall. A little later Colonel Cummings came to me, evidently somewhat excited, and whispered the order, "Hurry in your vedettes without making any noise." That done, we were started off at a double quick for the river.

As we neared the bridge, the light of dawning day revealed to us the opposite shore and heights, packed as far as the eye could penetrate with one living mass of moving troops; while hurrying over the straw-covered bridge were the last regiments of Burnside's army.

All that rattling of artillery which we who were on picket supposed to be new batteries going into position, preparatory to a renewal of the conflict in the morning, was made by a few empty caissons sent over to deceive the enemy, and drown by their clatter the unavoidable noise of our retiring troops. The ruse was entirely successful; and before the enemy mistrusted that Burnside was withdrawing, his entire army—pickets and all—had recrossed the river, taken up their pontoons, and were marching leisurely back to their camping grounds about Falmouth.

CHAPTER V.

SOMETHING MORE ABOUT FREDERICKSBURG.

AS our regiment did not become actively engaged at Fredericksburg, I attempted to crowd in the preceding short chapter all I thought necessary to narrate, in this connection, concerning that disastrous battle. But in reading the same after it had come back to me from the press, and the time for making corrections had passed, I discovered that the events of one entire day had been unwittingly left out, and that I had stated as occurring on Sunday night that which did not take place until Monday night. In order, therefore, to straighten the links already joined, and—by picking up and welding in the missing ones—to mend the break in the chain of principal experiences of the 124th which I am endeavoring to forge, it seems necessary to countermarch, and take a new start from the opening scene of the principal act in that bloody drama.

When at ten A. M. on Saturday, the mighty king of day approached, and majestically lifted the heavy fog curtain, under cover of which the Union generals had formed their battle lines and attacking columns within easy range of the enemy's guns, there appeared facing each other in hostile array upon that verdureless stage, which was soon to become a gory battlefield, two hundred thousand troops, equipped with all the modern enginery of war. This was undoubtedly as terribly grand a sight as had ever been witnessed on this continent. Never before had the vast proportions of the two grand armies appeared with such vivid distinctness. Stretching along the high grounds and covering every hill-top beyond the smouldering city, were long lines of massive earthworks, fromover the parapets and through the embrasures of

which three hundred cannon frowned. Behind these formidable works—like the mighty giant of ancient fable, his most vulnerable parts concealed by his impenetrable shield—stood the army of Northern Virginia, eighty thousand strong.

Marshalled on the open plains below, standing resolutely to their weapons, ready, waiting, for the order forward, was the army of the Potomac—the Hercules of the North, larger-bodied and stronger-limbed than his adversary, but without shield or helmet to ward off a single dart.

For a few moments an ominous silence prevailed, then the Union left was seen to move forward. A single bugle blast from in front of the city on the right, set Couch's brigades in motion toward Marye's Hill; flashes of fire, followed by curling clouds of smoke, darted from the Union batteries on the plain, and from the huge guns on Stafford Heights; while from the Confederate works came answering flashes. Bursting shells made fearful havoc in the advancing lines; but onward, right onward, faster and faster they moved, gradually fading from view, as the air, deadened by three hundred guns, became heavier and more dense. Anon, above the roar of cannon, the Union charging shout was heard. A sheet of flame lit up the rebel works, and as a dreadful crash of musketry—like a thunder-clap when the lightning strikes so near that one's eyes are blinded by the flash—was heard, huge clouds of smoke, uniting, shut in the dread combatants.

But few of the 124th witnessed, to any considerable extent, this grand scene. Half an hour after the regiment had crossed the river, Companies E and F were detached and sent, under command of Captain McBirney, to the Kenmere House, near the southern outskirts of the city, to support a battery belonging to our division. On reaching this battery they were stationed on high ground from which they might have witnessed Couch's advance against Marye's Hill; but as soon as the fog lifted, several men belonging to the battery were hit by bullets fired by concealed sharpshooters, and our infantrymen were ordered to lie down. This order, given just as a bullet passed within a few inches of Captain McBirney's head, was obeyed with alacrity, notwithstanding

their very natural desire to watch what was taking place in front of them. As soon as this battery opened, which was at the very commencement of the battle, two more gunners were picked off.

It was evident these unseen rebel marksmen were not far away, and a man of Company F volunteered to creep out between the lines, and if possible learn where they were secreted. Moving through a field, and past a suburban dwelling, he discovered a little cloud of smoke coming out of an octagon summer-house. As soon as he could get back and report this fact, a section of the battery was turned in that direction. The summer-house was soon demolished, and it was believed the troublesome sharpshooters were torn to pieces with it. At all events no one was seen to leave it and no more bullets came from that direction.

The regiment, excepting the companies referred to, was lying, it will be remembered, at the river, under cover of a steep bank. Near by, in charge of a single guard, there lay scattered over the ground about three hundred knapsacks. One of the regiments which had formed the first line that advanced against the enemy's works, had started from there. About noon, some twenty of its members returned, with faces begrimed with powder, and some of them with slight wounds, and reported their regiment had been almost annihilated. A little later, another of their number came in, and showed a gun with half its stock shot away, and was explaining to a squad of our men how the piece of shell which hit it had killed two of his comrades, when that order came for Piatt's brigade to move forward and form for a charge on the plains at the right of the city. As we sprang to our feet, and were about to take arms, several pieces of a prematurely bursting shell fell among us, destroying several old Belgians, which composed one of our gunstacks, and wounding three of our men. As soon as we moved up over the bank, stray bullets began to pass over us, and before night we became very familiar with their peculiar whistlings.

Sunday afternoon Corporal X—— walked into a deserted dwelling near the river, and seating himself at a piano he found there, struck up "Hail Columbia," but the tune was suddenly

cut short by a rebel cannon ball, which came in without ceremony through the side of the building, passed through the instrument, and aroused in the breast of the performer so strong a desire to get back to his regiment, that, unwilling to waste the time necessary to go out by the door. he walked straight through the nearest window without even halting to raise the sash.

It was Monday instead of Sunday night that we were on picket, listening to the clatter of empty caissons, which we believed to be newly arrived batteries going into position. We spent Sunday night at the river. In the evening large quantities of bedding, borrowed for the occasion from deserted dwellings near by, were brought down and spread out on the shore, and not a few of our number slept that night on feather beds, and had spread over them soft white woollen, instead of course gray blankets. But our Hail Columbia hero slept on the hard ground; and, I am told by his comrades, could never after that day's experience be induced, under any pretext, to enter a deserted Southern dwelling.

When—after sustaining a loss of thirteen thousand men in desperate but unsuccessful efforts to dislodge the foe—General Burnside allowed himself to become convinced that the enemy's works, manned and commanded as they then were, could not be carried by direct assault, and it was decided to withdraw to the old position at Falmouth, it became necessary to throw around the entire army, before the movement was begun, a strong picket line of fresh and reliable troops; which, did a necessity arise, could be used as a "forlorn hope."

Our brigade formed the extreme right of this line, and the 124th was one of the last, if not *the* last regiment to recross the bridge in front of the city. In our hasty withdrawal, four of our men, who had been posted by our adjutant or sergeant-major in an old building some distance in advance of our main line of vedettes, were forgotten and left at their post.

On our march back to camp we were obliged to ford a stream, the water of which came up to our knees, and was very cold. During the afternoon two of the men who had been left at Fred-

ericksburg, walked in camp soaking wet, and one of them—Private Benjamin Lancaster, of Company A—with chattering teeth gave the following account of his escape.

"Just after daybreak the enemy advanced a heavy line of skirmishers, and after firing two rounds we concluded to fall back to our main line; *but when we got where it was, it wasn't there.* Then we started for the reserve, but they too had gone, and so we made for the bridge, but that also had disappeared. At first I thought I must have fallen asleep on my post, and was dreaming, but just then I saw several Johnnies advancing toward us, and heard one of them shout, 'Halt, you d— Yankees, or we will blow your brains out.' I don't know what became of the others, but I was the farthest away from the gray-backs, and jumped down the river bank on which I was standing, ran half a mile up the shore, and hid in some brush. After resting there a short time, I crept on, keeping concealed as well as I could, until I came to a shallow-looking place in the river, which I thought was a ford; and I attempted to wade across. Before I reached the centre of the stream, the water was up to my chin, and I was obliged to drop my gun and accoutrements, and do a little tall swimming. As soon as I made my appearance on this side of the river, I was arrested by some of the Second corps pickets, marched off to their corps head-quarters, and taken before General—General—I forget his name—who, when I had explained to him all about it, ordered his provost-marshal to let me go. The general told me to hurry back to my old camp, where I would find my regiment, and change my clothes, before I took cold. I wonder how many suits of clothes he thought I had—I say, boys, won't you pile on a little more wood, I believe I am taking cold."

The morning after our return, nearly half the regiment answered the surgeon's call, and the names of nearly a hundred were placed on the sick list. Ten of this number died within six weeks, and many others never returned to duty with the regiment.

Just before the battle—while our brigade was lying on

Stafford Heights awaiting the completion of the pontoon bridges, I obtained from General Piatt permission to return to duty with my regiment, in order that I might have the honor of commanding, in their first battle, the gallant company of men I had conducted to the field. As soon as the regiment returned to their old camp, I was ordered to again report for duty at brigade head-quarters.

The third day after our return, I walked over to the regiment, and was standing in Company A's street, talking to one of the men, when I heard some one shout "John, dah," and looking up saw coming toward me the little black scamp who ran away with my haversack, from the bridge at the river. He had just arrived in camp, and was the most woe-begone looking contraband I had ever beheld. His eyes seemed sunk in his head. His black skin had lost its lustre, and was several shades lighter than I had ever seen it. His woolly pate, which had always been clean, black, and glossy, was matted, brown, dirty, and dead looking. His clothes were tattered and muddy—his corkless canteen hung spout downward, and his empty haversack was wrong side out.

There he stood, the tears trickling down his cheeks, so pitiable a sight that my own eyes involuntarily moistened; and yet, so extremely ludicrous, it seemed impossible to refrain from laughing. After a little, however, I got the mastery of both face and feelings, and said to him, in what I intended to be a severe tone, "You worthless, *cowardly* little vagabond, what are you doing here, after running away with my food, when you promised so faithfully to remain with me? What have you to say for yourself before I drive you from camp? Quick! if you have any excuse out with it." "Yes sah; yes sah," said he, "I'se got a scuse." "Well then," I replied, "let us hear it." "Well sah—well sah—I—I—I'se afeared you'll boot me." "Boot you? Why, there is nothing left of you to boot. But come—come, let us hear your excuse." "Well, massa—massa captain—I wasn't any more coward an you wah"—and then he boo-hooed louder than ever. That was a flanker I did not appreciate; for in the meantime quite a

crowd had gathered about us, and among the number several officers from adjoining camps.

"Well, now, Jack," said I, and this time in real earnest, "if you don't give me some satisfactory explanation of that assertion, I certainly will punish you, and that severely. You ran away, didn't you, before the first shell had fairly reached the water?" "Yes, sah."

"Well, Jack, did I run away?" "No, sah." "Why, then, you black rascal, dare you tell me, in presence of all these gentlemen, that I am as great a coward as you are?" "Well sah—well sah—you won't boot me!" "Not if you can explain away your lying accusation; but otherwise I certainly will."

"Well, now, massa captain, I runn'd away cause I didn't dar stay, and you staid cause you didn't dar runn'd away."

I had repeatedly told our sutler that I would pay no bill which had in it a charge for liquors. When my monthly statement came, it was between twenty and thirty dollars larger than usual, and the entire increase seemed to be for one item, written "sundries." I paid the bill.

My tent at brigade head-quarters was pitched on a hill that overlooked that portion of Falmouth plains on which Hooker's Grand Division lay encamped. This hill was covered with a thick growth of dwarf trees and underbrush. A little way down from the summit was a cleared, almost level spot, some two or three rods in extent. At the upper edge of this clearing was a huge rock, the only one to be seen, so far as I could learn, in that locality.

For a day or two after the battle, the weather was extremely cold; but the first Sunday after was very pleasant. The sun shone warm and bright, and toward evening I made my way through the brush, and sat down on the rock to watch the evening parade on the plain below.

A long, heavily laden supply train of huge white-covered army wagons, with six mule teams, was winding leisurely up the road from Aquia Creek, and branching off, in among the canvas hamlets which almost covered the plain. Presently I heard,

off to my right, the notes of a bugle call, which, ere they had died away, were taken up—repeated, and re-repeated all over the field. Then fifes and drums and cornet bands began to be heard; and there arose from all directions the mingled din of martial music; while emerging from every camp could be seen lines of troops, with polished arms, forming on flying colors. A few moments later the music gradually ceased, the glistening bayonets disappeared, the colors were gone, the noise and bustle was over, and all was quiet again. In the meantime, the sun had sunk out of sight, and I was about to return to head-quarters for my evening meal, when my ear caught, from a distance, the measured tappings of a single drum, accompanied by those mournful notes of the fife which tell the soldier plainer than words can express it, another comrade has fought his last battle and sleeps the sleep from which no earthly bugle call can wake him.

Putting my hand to my eyes, and peering toward whence the music came, I discovered, floating so far away I could just distinguish it, a hospital flag. At first I could detect no funeral train. Presently, however, I descried a small body of men who appeared to be standing still; but watching them a moment I discovered they were moving directly toward me. Then I sat down again on the rock, and waited to see where they would bury their dead.

Naturally my mind reverted to that vast procession of wounded men I had seen hurrying away from the bloody field of Fredericksburg; and I wondered was this poor fellow, now on the way to his last resting-place, one of that number.

Slowly and mournfully onward they came; until at length they reached the foot of the hill on which I sat, and passed from my sight, in among the trees and bushes. But the, to me, now painfully mournful notes continued, and were coming nearer and nearer. Soon the brush in my front began to rattle, and I discovered, just on the edge of the clearing, but a few feet from where I had been sitting, a newly opened grave.

Instinctively I slipped over, and partially concealed myself behind the rock just as they emerged from the brush, and

halting on the clearing, put down their rough cracker-box coffin. The music ceased, and for a few moments the little band of mourners stood there in silence, with downcast eyes. There was no chaplain there to repeat the burial service, or offer a prayer over their lifeless comrade. Was there *no one* among them, to say just one word ere they committed their dead to the cold earth? Soon their eyes, as with one accord, were raised and rested on their sergeant, a tall rough looking fellow, whom I noticed was the only one among them wearing stripes. Not a word was spoken, but the sergeant understood their appeal. His chin dropped to his breast, and for a moment he stood irresolute. Then stepping forward, he threw his hat on the ground, raised his face heavenward, stretched out his brawny arms, and while big tears trickled down his cheeks, with trembling voice prayed, "Great God of battles—as we bury poor Tom's mangled body, let his soul enter Heaven—Amen!"

CHAPTER VI.

FOUR MONTHS AT FALMOUTH.

ABOUT Christmas, General Piatt resigned, and I returned to duty with the regiment. The last frosty days of December wore slowly away, and the New Year on its arrival found us on the picket line. We were picketing then by brigades; and ours had gone out two days before, without tents. The 86th and 122d formed the reserves, and the 124th the outer lines, on which no fires were allowed. It was a bitter cold night. My company was on the right, and I was ordered to make the rounds of that portion of the line covered by our regiment at midnight. It was a watch night indeed for us all, but how unlike the old-fashioned Methodist watch-night many of us had been in the habit of enjoying at home, assembled with friends and loved ones in pleasant, well-warmed audience rooms.

At the appointed time I started down the line, found the sentinels pacing to and fro with quick heavy tread; their ears open to every unusual sound, and their eyes, as they wheeled about at the end of their beats, ever turning to the front; but their thoughts evidently were far away. Promptly the challenge was made, as the creaking of the frost beneath my feet announced my approach. But the sudden halt, the quick wheel, and the stamp of the foot, as the rifle came from shoulder to port, were all mechanically done, and mechanically I answered the challenge and passed on.

On the morning of the 2d we returned to camp, where a number of the companies found awaiting them express boxes filled with "good things," which had been sent them for a Christmas dinner. It is true they were a few days late, and some of the dainties were not as palatable as they would have been had they

arrived a week earlier. They were nevertheless greatly appreciated, and partaken of in a most hearty manner by the recipients and a few of their most intimate comrades. Meantime a majority of the poor fellows, who had not been so kindly remembered by their friends at home, made the best of their meal of salt pork and hard-tack.

The 4th of January was Sunday. There had been no regular services in the regiment for a long time, but it was generally understood that we were to have a sermon preached to us that morning, and the regiment was called together, as we supposed, for the purpose of listening to it. But our chaplain, after offering a short prayer and reading the 96th Psalm in a loud clear tone, excused himself on the ground that his lungs and throat were out of order.

In the evening we received orders to prepare for a review. At ten o'clock next morning we moved off, in heavy marching order, to the Philips House, which was three miles distant from our camp. Our entire corps, infantry and artillery, with wagon trains, ambulances, pack-mules, and even colored servants, had been ordered to assemble there. About noon, General Burnside, accompanied by a lady and a number of general officers, and followed by his and their respective staffs and a squadron of orderlies, appeared upon the scene. After riding along the line, this immense cavalcade galloped across the plain and ranged themselves in lines behind their chief, who took position on a little knoll about an eighth of a mile in front of us. Then forty-eight regiments and I think eight batteries, wheeled into column and passed in review. It was a grand sight, but the most attractive feature of the day was the lady on horseback, many of us not having feasted our eyes on the fair sex before for months.

January 10. From my diary. Our new rifles are here. Farewell, old Belgians, welcome Enfields, say all. I never saw the regiment in such high glee. All are rejoicing, from Colonel Ellis down to the contrabands. Evening—the men have been busy all day cleaning their guns, and when they assembled for dress

parade there was presented as happy and proud a line of faces as one could wish to see. We have always been ashamed of our homely, heavy weapons, and the only remarks I have heard to-day, approaching regret that the exchange has been made, came from our little round-shouldered Dutchman, Billy Saunders. As Billy dropped his piece on a pile of others which had been deposited at regimental head-quarters, he made an awkward lunge with the huge sword-bayonet, saying as he did so, "Boys, you don't know how much you owe to these old blunderbusses. It is my opinion that if it hadn't been for them you would have been tarnal nigh all killed at Fredericksburg. What general would be such a fool as to lead, in a charge, men armed with such toad-stickers?"

It is undeniable that the kind of arm a regiment carries frequently determines its position on a battle-field, and if the fact, that our guns were of an inferior quality had anything to do with our remaining on picket instead of uselessly dashing our lives out against a rebel fort, we perhaps ought to be thankful the exchange was not sooner made.

It is now very apparent to all that if we do not take a decidedly active part in the next engagement, it will not be our colonel's fault. He evidently believes that he commands one of the most reliable regiments in the field; and there is not a man in the regiment who doubts the abilities or bravery of their leader.

General Burnside, notwithstanding the disastrous failure of his attempt to force the enemy's lines at Fredericksburg, did not intend spending the winter on the north side of the Rappahannock.

On the 26th of December, the entire army was directed to prepare three days' cooked rations and get ready for a march; but no further orders on the subject were received, and comparative quiet prevailed, until the 15th of January. While out drilling that afternoon, we saw a long train of pontoons moving toward our right. And shortly after we returned to camp, orders came to send the sick from regimental to division hospitals.

On the 17th, extra rations were issued, and we were ordered to be ready to move in heavy marching order at nine o'clock the following morning. The night passed and nine o'clock came, but instead of an order to fall in, there came one postponing the movement for twenty-four hours. On the 19th we received another order, putting off the time of starting another twenty-four hours.

It began to look as if the contemplated movement was to end as did the one we prepared for on the 26th of December; and that afternoon we resumed our regular drills. But on the morning of the 20th, one of our brigade orderlies dashed up to Colonel Ellis's quarters with a general order from Burnside, stating that we were again to move against the enemy, and fixing one o'clock that afternoon as the hour of starting.

About noon we struck tents, stacked arms in company streets, and collected around our log-fires awaiting further orders; but they did not come. Toward evening the sky clouded. Just after dark a storm set in, and we pitched tents again, and crawled under them. When we awoke next morning, the rain was falling in very torrents. The men were instructed to keep their knapsacks packed, but none of us anticipated the contemplated movement would be begun until the storm should have passed over, and the muddy roads had become hard again. But about nine o'clock the rain slackened a little, and at ten there was heard, from all directions, the bugle call "Strike tents;" and down came our muslin shelters again. After shaking off the sleet—for the rain was freezing as it fell—these were soon rolled and strapped. Then the line was formed, and we crept off through the ever-deepening mud and rain, and hail and sleet. When night overtook us, we halted, or rather, were stuck fast in the mud, scarce three miles from camp. The rain was still falling, and freezing as it fell. We were soaking wet, and chilled to the very marrow of our bones; and there, in an open piece of woods, we added yet another to our already long list of nights of terrible suffering. Another day and still another night we remained, and all that time the cold rain continued, and deeper and deeper in the mud

sank the stalled trains and heavy guns. Rebel pickets on the southern shore were hallooing across to our men on this side the river, "I say, Yanks, it is mean, of you to keep us out here in the rain; why don't you come over with your big guns? We are waiting for you."

On the morning of the 23d thousands, of men were set to work building corduroy roads. All idea of attempting to advance any farther was abandoned, and the one thought which seemed to hold the mind of our commander-in-chief, was, how to get the army back on high ground before it sank entirely out of sight.

The roads were filled with artillery and wagons, sunk down so deep that the axletrees, and in some instances, hubs were entirely concealed. About noon the rain ceased. At three o'clock the sun came out and our regiment started back. As we came in sight of our old camp, we saw tumbling down the steep gravel bank of a railroad which ran just in front of it, our now highly prized, logical contraband, Jack Smith. He was grappling, and appeared to be in deadly conflict with something, but whether man or beast we could not at first determine. As soon as they reached the bottom, Jack, with an apparently desperate effort, and without letting go his grip, raised his antagonist clear off the ground and started up the steep bank again, but did not get half way to the top, when down they rolled once more, first one on top and then the other. As they struck the level ground Jack yelled like a loon.

He was evidently being punished, and several of my men asked permission to leave the column and hurry forward to his assistance. But before they reached him Jack was on his feet again. And to our utter astonishment we discovered his antagonist to be a piece of wood about his own size, and as we came still nearer we saw that poor Jack was as drunk as a lord.

As soon as it became apparent we were to return to our old camp, Jack had started back to get things fixed up a little, and some hot short-cake ready against our return. We did not get back as soon as he expected, and while he sat waiting for us, several colored boys, from other regiments, who had with them a canteen of commissary, came along, and concluded to get Jack

drunk, that they might steal his biscuit. But they had miscalculated as to the quantity of the dose required to completely lay Jack out. He drained their canteen, but was still able to keep between them and his biscuit until several of our men, who had been at work on the corduroy road and reached camp ahead of the regiment, appeared, when Jack placed one of them on guard and started to get the back-log for his fire, with which we found him grappling.

In all the affairs of life, but especially in war, continued success, let the real cause be what it may, frequently makes great men of very meagre material; while defeat, if it be but once repeated, let the fault rest here or there, *never fails* to belittle a military leader, be his real merit ever so great.

On the 26th of January, 1863, the army of the Potomac had a new commander, in the person of Major-General Joseph Hooker.

As soon as the army returned from Fredericksburg, one regiment after another began—though no orders to that effect had been issued—to put log walls under their tents, which not only gave them an opportunity to fix up sleeping places off the ground, but enabled them to stand erect under cover. At the time Burnside's last marching orders reached us, we had succeeded in making ourselves quite comfortable—in fact, were virtually in winter quarters. But during our absence on what is now generally known and spoken of by those who participated in it, as Burnside's mud march, nearly all these walls had been torn down, and the logs used in corduroying the roads. And on our return we found everything soaking wet, and the whole camp presenting a decidedly nasty, dilipidated, and cheerless appearance. But we soon got huge fires burning, the filth and debris partially cleared away, and our wet tents up, after the old fashion, on what had been our company streets. Then began the repairing and rebuilding the log walls. Before they were fairly completed orders came to change camp; but no one complained, for we were to move to a much pleasanter spot, near a piece of woods, where rumor said we were to be ordered to put up first-class winter quarters.

On Monday, the 26th, the same day General Hooker took

command, we pulled up, and moved off to our new grounds, which were situated about one and a half miles nearer Stoneman's switch. Here we again put up temporary shelters, laid out our camp, and set to work with a will, putting up comfortable log cabins.

Part of the men were sent to the woods for logs, with our regimental wagons, all of which had been unloaded, and sent to us for that purpose; while the others remained in camp, and put the logs in shape as fast as they came in.

For over a week the sound of the axe was heard, go which way you would, from early morn until late at night. Rapidly the woods and forests of that whole region disappeared, and gradually there arose in their stead some fifty thousand muslin and canvas-covered log cabins, grouped in from three to four hundred miniature cities, each a petty kingdom, the prerogatives of whose chiefs were more arbitrary than those of modern potentates and kings.

On the 29th of January, the regiment was visited for the first time by a United States paymaster, who dealt out to us all one and a-half months' pay. We had then been in the service nearly five months. But the men, reasoning that half a loaf was better than no bread, received what was paid them thankfully.

The weather throughout the month of February was quite severe, and a considerable quantity of snow fell. But each little log cabin had a good-sized fire-place, and as fire-wood was handy and plenty, we managed, when in camp, to keep tolerably warm. Our mud and wood chimneys did not always work first-rate. Sometimes they drew the wrong way, and the strong pine smoke, instead of going up, would seem to come rushing down, but this was only occasionally, and we soon got so that we did not mind being smoked a little.

Immediately after General Hooker took command, large bake-rooms were erected in every division, and soft bread began to be issued instead of hard-tack; and frequent issues of fresh beef replaced our usual weekly ration of salt pork. There certainly was a decided change for the better in everything, except our

long tours on picket. There we suffered the same as when under Burnside. But there was no help for that, and our occasional three days on the outer lines made us appreciate more fully than we otherwise would have done the meagre comforts of our camp.

On the 25th of February we started off, somewhat earlier than usual, for our now quite familiar picket line at Hartwood. It was quite muddy. The roads seemed to be breaking up, and occasionally as we marched along one of the men would step in a hole and sink down almost to his knees.

After relieving the grand reserve, four of our companies moved toward the front, to relieve the pickets. Just as they started, a small squadron of cavalry passed out by us on a dead run. Presently they came dashing back, through a piece of woods just in front of us, in utter confusion. Several horses were riderless, and most of the riders hatless. The officers were waving their swords over their heads, vainly endeavoring to rally their men. Every few yards a horse would sink into the mud, and in plunging to extricate himself, would fall with his rider, and together they would wallow in the mire.

Of course we knew what all this meant; and finding myself senior officer—Lieutenant-Colonel Cummins, who came out in charge of the regiment, being temporarily absent—I ordered the reserve forward to the support of our advance pickets, but before we reached them, a body of rebel cavalry appeared, and our vedettes opened fire; at which the reserve, with a shout, hurried forward. The rebels evidently did not expect to meet any considerable force of infantry, for the moment we appeared, they went fours about, and dashed off as wildly as our cavalry had come in. In the meantime Colonel Cummins came up, and we formed line, ready to receive them should they return; but they did not come back. During the day Berdan's sharp-shooters, and an entire brigade of infantry, were sent out to reinforce us.

Our frightened cavalry, as an excuse for their disgraceful stampede, had reported a force of the enemy's horse at least three thousand strong, in the act of swooping down on our picket line. The truth probably was that a strong reconnoitring party, hav-

ing come across our small body of horse, made a dash at them and accidentally ran into our infantry picket line.

On the 6th of March our turn for picket came around again, and we moved off to a new section of the line nearer camp. A portion of this line ran along the water's edge, on the north shore of the Rappahannock. The enemy's pickets were in plain sight on the opposite bank, and we occasionally witnessed the afternoon drill of a rebel brigade on the plains beyond.

During the month of March very little of especial interest occurred, and furloughs were granted to a considerable number of our officers and men.

On the 6th of April the entire army was ordered to prepare for a thorough inspection and review. The following day, after everything about camp had been put in the best possible order, and the clothing as well as the guns and accoutrements of the men had been searchingly examined, first by their company and then by their field-officers; we stacked arms in company streets, and a sentry was posted on an eminence not far from our camp, to announce the approach of the inspecting parties. About three P. M. our sentry reported them in sight, and the regiment was soon formed on the color line; but Colonel Ellis dimissed us, with orders to return to company streets; and directed that every man get out of sight in the tent nearest his position in his company line, and remain there, gun in hand, ready to spring to his place and hurry forward to the colors at the sound of the bugle. "A picket fence like that," said he, pointing to a regiment which stood with arms at a shoulder, in an adjoining camp, "is well enough, but I want to show these fellows that there is at least one *live* regiment in the army."

In a few moments there appeared at the head of an immense cavalcade a few rods to the left of our camp, riding on two magnificent chargers, a general with his bright stars and double row of shining buttons, and a dark, tall, lank-looking civilian, dressed in black clothes, and wearing a high beaver hat. At this juncture one of General Whipple's aids came riding at a break-neck gait toward our camp, with orders for the colonel to hurry

out his regiment; but before he had time to deliver his message the bugle had sounded, the regiment was properly in line, and the great Lincoln, with uncovered head and a smile on his otherwise careworn features, rode along our front, scanning our neat log cabins, peering into our faces, and chatting pleasantly with General Hooker as he went. As they passed beyond our camp and moved down a road that ran at right angles with the course they had been riding, they turned their heads, and looked back; but their eyes rested on a vacant color line, the regiment had disappeared, or rather had been dismissed, and the men were scattered over the camp.

The following morning we moved off some five miles, where a grand review took place, similar to the one held by General Burnside at the Phillips House on the 5th of January. Our corps, now commanded by General Sickles, was drawn up in one line. Forty odd regiments of infantry, ployed in double columns, formed the right; nine batteries of artillery the left. About one hundred yards in rear of the centre of this line stood two thousand mules. These, together with four hundred huge wagons to which they were attached, constituted the ammunition, baggage, and supply trains of our corps.

When the reviewing party appeared, headed by Lincoln, Hooker, and Sickles, riding abreast, many of the wagoners left their teams in order to get a view of the President. Suddenly a battery of heavy guns, stationed within a short distance of the wagon trains, began firing a salute. The very first report frightened several teams of green mules so that they ran away, and dashing against the others caused a stampede, which spread until nearly half the entire number were dashing away in the wildest confusion. Pell-mell they went, the huge wagons occasionally coming together with a tremendous crash. A number were upset, and the mules breaking loose would quicken their pace kicking as they ran. Some of the brutes appeared to keep their hind feet continually in the air, and to do all the running with their fore-legs. Several drivers, who managed to get in the hind parts of their wagons as the mules started, were speedily tumbled

out again; and John McGaw, of our regiment, and many others, were run over and severely injured. Not a few of the mules had their legs broken, or were killed outright, and a considerable number must have been captured by other corps or have gone over to the enemy. At all events, they were never returned to their original keepers. The review, with this exception, passed off very satisfactorily. The next evening the following order was read at dress parade to every regiment in our division.

"ORDERS.

"HEAD-QUARTERS 3D DIVISION, 3D A. C., BELLE AIR, VA., April 9, 1863.

"The General commanding desires to inform the officer and men of this Divison that His Excellency the President, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Potomac, were pleased to express themselves gratified with the reception given them by the various regiments, on the 7th inst.

"The 124th N. Y. V., the 12th N. H. V., and the U. S. S. S., were mentioned with especial praise.

"By command of

"BRIG.-GEN. WHIPPLE.

(Signed)

"HENRY R. DALTON, *A. A.-G.*

(Official)

"BEN M. PIATT, *Captain* and *A. A.-G.*"

CHAPTER VII.

CHANCELLORSVILLE.

ON the 27th of April, our corps—the Third—General Daniel E. Sickles commanding, was reviewed by General Hooker, accompanied by Secretary Seward and a number of noted generals and civilians. While passing in review we saw heavy columns of troops moving in a westerly direction.

About noon on the 28th, marching orders reached the 124th, and at four P. M. we bade adieu to the now roofless log cabins which during the greater part of the time for months past, had been our homes, and marched to General Whipple's head-quarters, where our division was soon assembled, in heavy marching order; *decidedly heavy*, for each man carried, in addition to his food, blankets, gun, and accoutrements; eighty rounds of ammunition and a change of clothing. About half-past four, the General and his staff rode past, and our division fell in and moved off after them in an easterly direction, passing as it went thousands of deserted log cabins. It soon became evident that the entire army was in motion, and that we had been among the last to break camp. It was very foggy, and we could see but little of what was taking place about us. Just where we were going, or what was to be accomplished or attempted, were matters about which we could but speculate.

Gradually the foggy daylight changed to foggy darkness; but on, on, we pushed, hour after hour until midnight, when we bivouacked near the Rappahannock not far from Bell Plains. We had not moved so far, considering the time occupied, but the march was a very severe one, owing principally to our long inactivity, and the monstrous loads the men were obliged to carry. And when the orders, "Halt! close up, front," were

followed by "Stack arms" and "Break ranks," there was a murmur of satisfaction, and shouts of "Good," "Thank the Lord," and the like, from all along the line. Then off went the heavy knapsacks, and in a few moments we were rolled in our blankets and fast asleep.

On the morning of the 29th, we were called up at daylight; and the men, after hurriedly gathering small handfuls of dry twigs, started little fires and cooked their coffee. In the meantime we could hear quite brisk skirmish firing in the direction of the river, both above and below us. After breakfast we moved forward about half a mile, and halted in plain sight of the enemy's pickets on the opposite side of the river. Our whole corps was there, and we soon learned that it was supporting the First and Sixth corps, which, under command of General Sedgwick, had during the night bridged the river, and rumor said were then crossing: the First corps at Pollocksmills, some distance below, and the Sixth at Franklin, just above us.

About noon we received a mail, and as night approached, put up our tents. The next morning (April 30th), the regiment was mustered, after which the following order was read to us:

"HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, CAMP NEAR FALMOUTH, VA., April 30, 1863.

"It is with heart-felt satisfaction that the commanding general announces to the army, that the operations of the last three days have determined that our enemy must either ingloriously fly, or come out from behind his defences and give us battle on our own ground, where certain destruction awaits him.

"The operations of the Fifth, Eleventh, and Twelfth corps have been succession of a splendid achievements.

"By command of

"MAJOR-GENERAL HOOKER.

"S. WILLIAMS, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*"

What had actually been accomplished by the Fifth, Eleventh, and Twelfth corps, that was termed by our commander a succession of splendid achievements, was left to our imagination. That they had caught, and were holding, Lee and Jackson, with the Rebel Army of Northern Virginia, in a trap, which rendered inglorious flight their only means of escape from certain destruction, was

taken with a grain of allowance. And the men were heard whispering to one another, "I had rather see it than hear tell of it." But this order, on the whole, had an inspiriting effect; and the old enthusiasm and hopefulness with which we had started out on our disastrous fall and winter campaign, seemed to reanimat not only the 124th but all the adjoining troops. When at two o'clock that afternoon the bugle again called us in line, the men sprang to their places as if infused with new life. "Hi! hi! my tulips," shouted Ellis, "that's something like—you're are not dead yet, I see." Then we countermarched, and started off at a lively gait, moving back past our old winter quarters, and bivouacking, about one o'clock next morning, in a pear orchard five miles west of Falmouth.

May 1.—Were up at day-break this morning, and after partaking of a hastily prepared breakfast pushed on to, and crossed the Rappahannock at the United States Ford, which we reached about ten A. M. As we stepped off the pontoon bridge on the southern shore, we noticed, running along in front of us, a well constructed line of the enemy's earth-works, behind which a single brigade, it would seem, might have held the ford against any force that could have been brought against it. Leaving the ford, we moved off in a northerly direction about three miles, and halted in a white-oak wood.

And now, while the regiment rests for a few hours on the outskirts of the battle-field let us take a look about the lines; note the changes which have taken place during the eight months we have been in the service; see how many of the nine hundred with which we left Goshen are in the line, and inquire as to what has become of the absent.

Several have been accidentally wounded, and three or four have been captured by the foe. None have as yet actually fallen in battle; but the exposure, privations, and sufferings of the march and camp have driven away the faithless and weak-hearted, while disease, brought about by the same causes, has not only weeded out the weak-bodied, but has taken away some of the brave and strong.

Sergt. Peter L. Wood.....of A
John Robinson.....A
Thomas Kelley.....A
Charles McVay.....A
Samuel Clark.....A
Samuel Shultz.....B
Alfred Yeomans.....B
Stephen W. Brown.....C
James Curry.....C
Isaiah Rumsey.....C
James H. Bertholf.....D
Isaac Garrison.....D
Cornelius Allison.....D
Zebulon Hallock.....E
Jonathan Force.....E
Isaac Ferguson.....of E
Charles E. Haxton.....E
Corp. William Decker.....F
David Titsworth.....F
Jesse Terwilliger.....F
William H. H. Hunt.....F
Charles T. Cornelius.....G
John H. White.....G
Corp. David Howland.....H
John Hatch.....H
William Shelp.....H
Sergt. Wilson Weygant.....I
David Hepper.....I
George Randell.....K
John M. Stalbird.....K

have been forcibly enrolled in the shadowy army, and led through the cold waters across the black river, by the dread Commander's hot-headod recruiting officer, Typhoid, and his aids.

CAPTAIN W. A. MCBIRNEY.....of E
1ST LIEUT. W. E. WEYGANT.....B
1ST LIEUT. JAMES F. ROOSA.....K
1ST LIEUT. J. B. STANBROUGH.....I
2D LIEUT. DAVID GIBBS.....G
1st Sergt. L. E. Elston.....F
1st Sergt. A. McDougal.....H
Sergt. Francis Mead.....H
Sergt. James McCollum.....A
Sergt. John R. Banker.....E
Corp. W. D. Millspaugh.....B
Corp. Wm. G. White.....B
Corp. Martin Mould.....I
Corp. Edmund F. Allen.....I
Corp. Jonas G. Davis.....C
Corp. Chas. A. Avery.....A
Corp. Z. Dusenberry.....F

DRUMMERS.

J. M. Merritt.....of G
W. Johnston.....D
James H. McElroy.....D
Henry M. Cannon.....A

HOSPITAL STEWARD

John Van Horne.

WAGON MASTER,

Alfred Gray.....of D

TEAMSTERS.

Ezekiel Brundage.....of G
Joseph Gordon.....B

PRIVATES.

Chauncey B. Jones.....of A
Henry J. Powell.....B
N. C. Hanford.....B
Clark Coon.....B
David Babcock.....B
Daniel Babcock.....B
Charles Harrington.....B
John Ryerson.....B
S. Millspaugh.....B
Charles C. Clark.....C
John Sullivan.....C
David Odell.....C
Cornelius L. Rhodes.....C
Abram Merritt.....C
Joseph Helms.....C
A. H. Barton.....C
William King.....C
John L. Goodsall.....C
Daniel C. Jennings.....C
Wm. H. G. Thorp.....C
John Hagan.....C
Sweezy Degraw.....C
George W. Cabrey.....C
Daniel Halstead.....E
Richard Traver.....E
Hiram Clark.....E
John Granville.....E
Peter T. Stalter.....E
William W. Drake.....E
Lewis Trister.....E
John J. Stafford.....E

William Decker.....E
Stephen E. Ostrum.....E
George Dunmoodey.....E
David B. Wheat.....E
Josiah Garrison.....F
E. H. Garrison.....F
Nelson Dunlap.....F
William Boyst.....F
C. A. Nelson.....F
Lewis Williams.....F
Thomas B. Peck.....F
W. S. Cook.....F
C. W. Merritt.....G
Reuben Turner, Sr.....G
Reuben Turner, Jr.....G
Francis E. Merritt.....G
Napoleon B. Odell.....G
Elijah Fenton.....G
Stephen Decker.....G
George Cripps.....G
Thomas Vanstrander.....H
Charles H. Stephens.....H
Charles W. Evans.....H
Henry Kidd.....H
Nathan H. Duffie.....H
J. A. Miliken.....H
William B. Sherman.....H
Henry Seaman.....H
Daniel T. Tears.....H
William S. Brooks.....C
David Carey.....I
Eli Vance.....I
T. R. Van Tassel.....I
Ira Barnhart.....I
John H. Brooks.....I
Alexander B. Crawford.....I
Patrick O'Neil.....I
N. C. Drake.....K
Reuben C. Miller.....K
Stephen W. Frost.....K
Charles M. Weller.....K
David N. Wilkin.....K
Jonathan Corey.....K
John R. Meehan.....K
Jonathan Acker.....K
Peter Noll.....K
F. M. Wemer.....D
Nelson Speer.....D
Gilbert S. Howard.....D
John N. Rose.....D
Robert C. Leeper.....D
Richard Romine.....D
Samuel Kniffin.....D
William Dolson.....D
Charles H. Acker.....D

have been discharged because of physical disability, arising in most instances from disease contracted since they have been in the field.

Corp. Benjamin Z. Bowen.....of A
James Lewis.....B
Nathan W. Potts.....C
David Bowen.....C
George J. Thorn.....C
William Twiggs.....C

have been transferred to the regular army.

Corporal John L. Kalbfuss, of F, received a commission as first lieutenant in, and has been transferred to, a West Virginia regiment.

Lieut. Isaac M. Martin.....of I
Charles Kline.....A
Benjamin Lancaster.....A
Samuel Green.....B
John A. Space.....B
Brice E. Birdsall.....B
Corp. William White.....C
John Burns.....E
James J. Baker.....of F
John W. Bennett.....G
Hiram W. Degrote.....G
John Studer.....K
Henry J. Wright.....K
Alfred G. Randell.....K
Gabriel Coleby.....K

are absent without leave.

Lieutenant A. WHITTENBEECHER, of Co. E, has been dishonorably dismissed the service.

Captain ISAAC NICOLL, of G, Lieutenants CHARLES B. WOOD, of A, and WILLIAM E. MAPES, of B, and twenty enlisted men, are absent on ten-day furloughs.

Captain LEANDER CLARK, of I,* Lieutenant WILLIAM A. VERPLANK, of E, and about one hundred enlisted men, are absent sick.

Adjutant ARDEN and Quartermaster DENNISTON have resigned; the former in order to muster as major of a heavy artillery regiment, the latter because of physical disability.

Quartermaster HENRY F. TRAVIS,

Commissary Sergeant Ellis A. Post .....
Quartermaster's-Sergt. Geo. H. Chandler,
Commissary Clerk, Calvin C. Lutes...of A
Q. M. Clerk, R. Connelly, Jr C
Private John McGaw.....I
Wagoner Edward Ginner .....A
" Ephraim Stephens.....A
" Daniel Morgan,.....A
" Joseph Johnson.....A
Wagoner Whitmore Baxter.....I
" David Barnes.....B
" Charles Godfrey.....K
" Thomas Burhans.....K
" George Morgan .....E
" John Duffie. .....H
" William H. Decker.....C
" James H. Clark.....D
" A. J. Mesler.....F

are with the supply train, which has not yet crossed the river.

Sergeant Horace Hammond.....of F
James Jones.....A
Charles W. Davis.....D
James H. Clark .....D
Thomas McBride.....I
Samuel A. White.....of I
Nathan Edwards.....C
George King.....C
A. J. Van Zile.....G
Samuel M. Weeden..... ..D

are attached to our division ambulance corps, which is not far away, and when we are led into action I have no doubt they will be close at hand with stretchers to bear away our wounded.

Abram Hyatt.....of A
John Edwards ..... D
John Gordon.....I
E. D. Van Keuren.....H
David Wright..... .....of C
James B. Moore.....E
Henry Dill.....G

are with our division pioneer corps, and may be called upon to share with us the dangers of the battle-field.

* Captain Clark, though properly classed with the "absent sick," followed the regiment across the river, and remained at our field hospital during the battle, rendering such services as he was able, to the wounded of our regiment, especially to the men of his own company, a number of whom have since spoken to me in most flattering terms of the captain's kind attention, and efforts to alleviate their sufferings on that occasion.

Dr. Marshall was left, with our sick, in division hospital at Stoneman's Switch.

Surgeon Thompson has been ordered to report for duty at a field hospital which is being established near United States Ford.

Chaplain Bradner is, I presume, with Dr. Thompson.

Lieutenant H. P. Ramsdell is aide-de-camp on the staff of Colonel Franklyn, our brigade commander. All others not present, or already accounted for, are on detached service; most of them occupying what soldiers term "soft positions," beyond the range of shot and shell.

PRESENT FOR DUTY.

At the head of the regiment, waiting for the order "Forward!" stands Colonel A. Van Horne Ellis, Lieutenant-Colonel F. M. Cummins, and Major James Cromwell.

Adjutant William Bronson, and his assistant, Sergeant-Major William B. Van Houten, are at their respective posts.

Assistant Surgeon R. V. K. Montfort, and Hospital Steward Isaac Ellison, with our drum corps,

John G. Buckley, of H, Leader.

Arthur Haigh.....of H—Fife.	George W. Camfield.....of K—Drum.
Charles Whitehead.....of H—Fife.	John N. Cole.....of I—Drum.
George W. Dimmick.....of D—Fife.	R. D. Stephens.....of E—Drum.
Henry C. Payne.....of B—Fife.	William Hamilton.....of B—Drum.
Robert L. Travis.....of F—Drum.	Henry Hoofman.....of C—Drum.
A. J. Millspaugh.....of K—Drum.	C. Van Gordon.....of G—Drum.

to assist them, will, as soon as the battle begins, be ordered to fall to the rear and look after such of our wounded as are able to crawl back to them, or are so fortunate as to be carried there by our stretcher-bearers.

Bugler Moses P. Ross stands, with his bugle swung across his shoulder, near the colonel. And now we come to the rank and file, and the officers of the line, standing at their proper places in front and rear of their companies.

CAPTAIN CHARLES H. WEYGANT. (A.)

1ST SERGT. John C. Wood.		
CORP. W. H. Campbell.	James G. Ciles.	CORP. J. M. Miller, of Co. G.
CORP. Robert C. Hunt.	John Lewis.	*Right General Guide.*
Samuel Yeomans.	Joseph Brownley.	SERGT. Peter Rose.
William Odell.	Wesley Morgan.	
Robert Potter.	Newton Gotchieus.	
William Carpenter.	F. B. Gallow.	
Charles W. Gallow.	Edward Rice.	
George Sering.	Robert Ashman.	
L. L. Jackson.	Isaac L. Conklin.	SERGT. O. H. Whitney.
John H. Dingee.	Samuel L. Conklin.	
CORP. Thomas Hart.	Daniel Ackerman.	
CORP. Joseph Davey.	Jacob Wilson.	
CORP. John W. Taylor.	John H. Warford.	
Samuel Clark.	John Polhamus.	
Samuel Potter.	Allen Owen.	
Richard Rollings.	Frank Rhinefield.	
Henry Arcularius.	Joseph Gardner.	2D LT. CHAS. T. CRISSEY.
Jabez Odell.	Gilbert D. W. Roat.	
Jacob Lent.	John H. Conklin.	
Joseph L. Simpson.	Daniel Morgan.	
Charles H. Valentine.	Jeremiah Hartnett.	
Enos Jenkins.	Michael Hager.	
Theodore Smith.	John H. Judson.	
CORP. Abram Bellows.	James McGrath.	SERGT. Samuel T. Rollings.

CAPTAIN IRA S. BUSH. (F.)

1ST SERGT. John D. Drake.		
CORP. James Comey.	A. T. Drake.	
CORP. M. Rensler.	Reuben Doty.	SERGT. E. M. B. Peck.
Levi Cartwright.	F. H. Rossman.	
Sanford L. Gordon.	M. W. Quick.	
J. S. Crawford.	Ira Wilcox.	
George W. Tompkins.	J. Z. Drake,	
Judson P. Adams.	William Balmos.	
William V. C. Carmer.	Jacob Garrison.	SERGT. Chas. H. Hull.
J. J. Harrigan.	Floyd S. Goble	
C. B. Anderson.	J. C. Magie.	
H. R. Broadhead.	Ransom Wilcox.	
S. S Crawford.	James Carty.	
A. J. McCarty.	I. G. Gillson.	
CORP. Nathan Hershler.	Charles Roberty.	
CORP. James H. Taylor.	R. L. White.	2D LT. S. W. HOTCHKISS.
CORP. T. R. Allington.	J. M. Young.	
P. A. F. Hanaka.	E. Coddington.	Jeremiah Sisco.
B. L. Tompkins.	G. W. Adams.	George Garrett.
William C. Van Sickle.	A. W. Quick.	Edward Sharp.
John T. Fisher.	Charles P. Kirk.	F. Rundle.
H. B. Appleman.	J. N. Hazen.	Job M. Snell.
Barney F. Kean.	Ira Gordon.	W. H. Schofield.
CORP. Charles Peters.	T. H. Jefrey.	J. Cunningham.
CORP. A. S. Barkley.	John G. Ogg.	SERGT. A. P. Francisco.

CAPTAIN JAMES W. BENEDICT. (D.)

SERGT. John Cowdrey.
CORP. William Wright. Jesseman Dolson.
CORP. Ebenezer Holbert. John S. Gray.
John M. Garrison. Gilliam Bertholf.
William L. Becraft. Benjamin Gray.
R. Quackenbush. George W. Decker.
Norman A. Sly. William H. Tomar.
Joel McCann. George B. Kinney. 1ST. LIEUT. DANIEL SAYER.
John C. Degraw. John Hall.
John W. Leeper. John K. Clark.
Norman L. Dill. Wells Benjamin.
William E. Hyatt. Joseph R. Ray.
CORP. F. A. Benedict. J. F. Quackenbush.
Joseph Wood. David F. Raymond
Coleman Morris. Olander A. Humphrey.
R. S. Lameroux. David Currey.
Nathan Hunt. William H. Callister.
Abram S. Furshee. Thomas S. Storms.
Zopher Wilson. John Gannin. 2D LT. JOHN W. HOUSTON.
Joseph Brooks. William Mann.
William McGarrah. H. S. Quackenbush.
Carl G. Hoffman. Daniel P. Dugan.
James Pembleton. Thomas P. Powell.
CORP. Gideon H. Pelton.

FIRST LIEUTENANT THOMAS J. QUICK. (I.)

1ST SERGT. W. W. Smith.
CORP. William Wallace. Edward Oney.
CORP. Alex. M. Valet. Joseph Hanna. SERGT. Amos M. Eager.
Robert Wilson. William Milligan.
James Partington. William Sutherland.
James T. Titchener. John Hamil.
John N. Knapp. Jeduthan Millspaugh.
David L. Kidd. Rensalaer D. Baird.
Nelson Foot. James Bovell.
John Joice. James Cooper.
William Whan. James Flannigan.
C. S. Allen. Anson Hamilton. SERGT. Spencer C. Brooks.
Cortland Bodine. Nathaniel Jackson.
James C. Haggerty. J. H. McCallister.
CORP. J. B. Chatfield. Newton B. Pierson.
CORP. A. P. Millspaugh. Alex. Thompson.
J. P. Wightman. David Loughridge.
Thomas Farley. William Moore.
William Hamilton. Patrick Ryan. SERGT. A. T. Vanderlyn.
James S. Barrett. Smith Birdsley.
G N. Tucker. William Edgar.
Henry Losey. Henry H. Snyder.
George Weygant. Charles Lozier.
Giles Curran. Patrick Keane.
CORP. Samuel Chalmers. David Storms.
CORP. James A. Smith. Henry R. Turner. SERGT. Charles Stewart.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM SILLIMAN. (C.)

1ST SERGT. William H. Many.
CORP. Charles Knapp. Samuel Lewis.
William A. Homan. Peter Conklin. SERGT. Geo. L. Brewster.
Duncan W. Boyd. Ephraim Tompkins.
Thomas Rodman. Morvalden Odell.
William Bodenstein. Daniel Pine.
Frederick Dezendorf. Andrew M. Boyd.
Albert E. Bunce. Albert Wise.
CORP. Daniel O'Hara. John Tompkins.
CORP. William Mead. Wm. W. Amerman. SERGT. Peter P. Hazen.
James H. Barnes. John Thompson.
Clark Smith, Jr. George Briggs.
Robert Rush. James D. Tilton.
Samuel Dodge. David L. Westcott.
Charles H. Goodsall. James A. Ward. 2D LIEUT. JAS. A. GRIER.
Daniel S. Gardner. James E. Daniels.
CORP. Charles Chatfield. Daniel C. Rider. SERGT. Thomas Taft.

CORP. Samuel McQuaid, I. CORP. Ezra Hyatt, D. CORP. O. U. Knapp, F.
COLOR SERGT. T. Foley, C. CORP. J. P. Moulton, C. CORP. Dan. S. White, G.
CORP. Wm. H. Hazen, B. CORP. G.W. Edwards, A. CORP. W. L. Fairchild, H.

CAPTAIN DAVID CRIST. (H.)

SERGT. John Rowland.
CORP. Theron Bodine. William Buchanan. SERGT. A. R. Rhinehart.
CORP. David Mould. Judson B. Lupton.
Noah Kimbark. Henry Mathews.
John Rediker. G. M. Legg.
David D. Post. William McVay.
S. S. Youngblood. William Brown.
Milton Crist. Jesse F. Camp.
Josiah Dawson. Thornton Dawson.
Charles W. Tindall. William H. Dawson. SERGT. William H. Cox.
Charles Seaman. Jeremiah Crist.
Van Keuren Crist. Charles A. McGregor.
James Crist. Edward Hunter.
Charles A. Foster. William S. M. Hatch.
CORP. John R. Post. Grandison Judson.
CORP. Thomas Bradley. Robert Mocking.
Lyman Fairchild. William Whiteside.
Andrew Armstrong. Charles E. Brown.
Joseph W. Delamater. Thomas H. Baker.
Chester Judson. George Butters.
Thomas O'Connell. John McCann.
William Dawson (2d). Daniel W. Baker. 2D LIEUT. JOHN R. HAYS.
James E. Homan. George O. Fuller.
Francis S. Brown. Abram Hawley.
Clark B. Gallation. Jacob F. Jordan.
CORP. A. R. Rapalje. Andrew Bowman.
CORP. Benjamin Dutcher. Daniel Carman. SERGT. Geo. B. Youngblood.

FIRST LIEUTENANT HENRY GOWDY. (E.)

1ST SERGT. T. M. Robinson.

CORP. William J Daley.	Joseph H. Johnson.	
Curtis Ackerman.	Isaac W. Daley.	
John W. Taylor.	William L. Dougherty.	
Abraham Rogers.	James Sloat.	
James W. Parsons.	John H. Sarvice.	
John Scott.	William Mackey.	
Lewis W. Baxter.	Judson Kelley.	
Theophilus Dolson.	Hezekiah Harris.	
Edward Glenn.	Horace Wheeler.	
A. W. Lamereaux.	Charles M. Everett.	
James A. Beakes.	Charles J. Fosdick.	
CORP. John H. Little.	John C. Staples.	SERGT. John J. Scott.
CORP. Hiram Ketchum.	Solomon Carr.	
CORP. William H. Howell.	Lewis Gardiner.	
Josiah Harris.	Matthew W. Wood.	
Benjamin Hull.	William H. Shaw.	
J. M. Coddington.	Adam W. Beakes.	
Charles Newell.	Lewis M. Tonton.	
Charles Downing.	John W. Hirst.	
George C. Godfrey.	Miles Vance.	
Henry M. Howell.	Simeon Wheat.	
Arch. Freeman.		
CORP. Adam W. Miller.	George Nichols.	SERGT. William Price.
CORP. Moses Crist.	John H. Miller.	

CAPTAIN WILLIAM A. JACKSON. (K.)

1ST SERGT. Lewis S. Wisner.

CORP. J. R. Conning.	Henry C. Baker.	SERGT. J. J. Crawford.
A. S. Holbert.	John W. Pitts.	
John C. Vermylia.	Thomas Kincaid.	
John Carroll.	H. R. Mayette.	
Jacob E. Smith.	Paul Holliday.	
John W. Parks.	J. McDermott.	
Jacob Cameron.	Sylvanus Grier.	1ST. LT. JAMES FINNEGAN.
Alonzo Price.	N. J. Conklin.	
James H. Conklin.	Wm. H. H. Wood.	
David U. Quick.	Patrick Cuneen.	
Egbert S. Puff.	Michael Cullen.	SERGT. W. W. Ritch.
CORP. Isaac Decker.	Isaac Kanoff.	
CORP. D. Carpenter.	Samuel V. Tidd.	
Stephen B. Kerr.	G. H. Stephens.	SERGT. W. T. Ogden.
William W. Carpenter.	N. B. Mullen.	
Nathan M. Hallock.	Ira S. Ketcham.	
Samuel Malcomb.	Gordon B. Cox.	
Cornelius Crans.	John O'Brien.	2D LIEUT. JACOB DENTON.
Joseph Point.	R. McCartney.	
John Skelton.	Cornelius Herron.	
A. W. Miller.	David S. Purdy.	
Daniel E. Webb.	Alonzo S. Frost.	
CORP. G. Van Sciver.	W. W. Bailey.	SERGT. Winfield W. Parsons.

FIRST LIEUTENANT JAMES O. DENNISTON. (G.)

1ST SERGT. W. H. Benjamin.		
CORP. Abraham Denney.	Harvey A. Brock.	
CORP. George W. Odell.	Selah Brock.	SERGT. H. J. Estabrook.
Mat. Sager.	Hector Finney.	
Albert W. Parker.	John Chambers.	
David H. Corwin.	David Lowers.	
Grant B. Benjamin.	Gilbert Peet.	
Garrett H. Bennett.	W. H. Trainer.	
Peter Higgins.	John Trainer.	
Daniel Riggenbaugh.	Joseph Miller.	
Cyrenius Giles.	George A. Griffin.	SERGT. Robert Fairchild.
William E. Cannon.	Thomas Corbett.	
Isaac W. Parker.	J. J. Taylor.	
William Campbell.	Daniel Giles.	
CORP. Lewis P. Miller.	Alexander Trainer.	
Patrick Touhey.	William Rake.	
Abram Stalter.	James Roke.	
George R. Fitzgerald.	Walter Barton.	
John M. Calyer.	William Jackson.	SERGT. Isaac Decker.
William Hauxhurst.	William Tysoe.	
Nelson De Groat.	William Fosbury.	
Francis McMahon.	A. H. Merritt.	
John Newkirk.	Eli Hughes.	Cornelius Hughs.
George W. Coleman.	Joseph Jones.	Charles Benjamin.
Daniel Rider.	Oliver Miller.	John H. H. Conklin.
CORP. S. T. Estabrook.	Wm. D. Dawkins.	
CORP. Joshua V. Cole.	Charles A. Ensign.	SERGT. F. F. Wood.

CAPTAIN HENRY S. MURRAY. (B.)

1ST SERGT. C. A. Wheeler.		
CORP. Francis Lee.	M. S. Holbert.	
John Eckert.	Simon Bellis.	SERGT. Wm. Valentine.
Reuben Rynders.	D. McCormick.	
George Shawcross.	Joseph Bross.	
Wesley Storms.	Herman Crans.	
E. M. Carpenter.	John Glanz.	
R. J. Holland.	James Gavin.	2D LIEUT. G. S. Tuthill.
Ezra F. Tuthill.	Jesse Hunter.	
J. M. Merritt.	E. N. Laine.	
William Merritt.	George Hawley.	
William Snyder.	George Culver.	
CORP. James Scott.	Wm. Lamereaux.	SERGT. Coe L. Reevs.
CORP. Henry O. Smith.	Patrick Leach.	
E. B. Benjamin.	Benjamin M. Little.	
Samuel Green.	William H. Lucky.	SERGT. J. H. Hanford.
R. W. Gardner.	James Odell.	
Samuel Sherman.	Hugh McShane.	
A. W. Tucker.	John F. Brown.	SERGT. R. R. Murray.
William E. Titus.	A. J. Messenger.	
Charles H. Bull.	J. J. Messenger.	
Harrison Storms.	Joseph Pratt.	CORP. S. W. Smith, of K,
CORP. Harrison Bull.	S. Garrison.	*Right General Guide.*

These are the Orange Blossoms whose metal is about to be tested in the double-heated crucible. This is the 124th, which is soon to moisten with the blood of its brave men the recreant soil of Virginia. Virginia! birthplace of Washington. Virginia! home of Presidents, for so many years honored above all your sisters, but now, alas! sunk so low—under the crushing weight of that vile institution which has made of your sons of presidents breeders of bondsmen, dealers in human chattels, yea, traffickers not unfrequently in their own flesh and blood—as to be known by those, who aforetime have honored you, as the hotbed of treason, the home of traitors, the accursed theatre of the most gigantic civil war of modern times.

The movement below Fredericksburg was a most successful feint. The manœuvres of the First, Third, and Sixth corps in that direction, and of the Second corps, which remained in front of the city, completely absorbed the attention of the enemy, who set to work with his usual energy, throwing up additional earthworks along the threatened portion of his line. The concentration of the enemy's attention at that point made it possible for the Fifth, Eleventh, and Twelfth corps, to move off unobserved, and—by making a long detour and crossing two rivers nearly thirty miles from their starting point—to successfully turn the enemy's left, sweep down the southern shore of the Rappahannock, uncovering the fords as they came, and plant themselves on a strong position in the rear of Gen. Lee's elaborate works, before the minds of the Confederate generals were fairly disabused of their mistaken idea that the whole of Hooker's army was in front of, and about to make an attack on, their now doubly fortified right. As soon as this powerful turning column effected a lodgment at Chancellorsville, the Third corps retraced its steps, and, preceded by two divisions of the Second corps, hastened to join it. And there we were, on the afternoon of May 1st, not less than sixty-five thousand strong, in rear and some thirteen miles west of the enemy's centre at Fredericksburg.

The 124th had lain in the woods but a short time when we heard, first skirmishing, and then heavy infantry firing from

the direction of Fredericksburg. A considerable portion of the army, under the immediate command of General Hooker, whose head-quarters were then at the Chancellor House, had been ordered to advance and secure possession of a commanding ridge on which it was said our line of battle was speedily to be formed, in case the enemy showed a disposition to fight.

Now it appears that General Lee had selected this same position for a defensive line, and leaving some four or five brigades at Fredericksburg to confront Sedgwick, was hurrying forward his main body, in hopes of getting in position there, before Hooker's force should reach it. The vanguards of the opposing forces came together on the coveted ground, and a spirited engagement took place; but the Union forces were too strong for their opponents, and speedily, though not without considerable loss, compelled them to fall back on their main body, which soon came in sight and began deploying in line of battle; a rather strong assurance that inglorious flight was no part of Lee's programme.

This ridge was in the open country just beyond the dense forest which surrounded the cleared farm, which, with its somewhat commodious brick dwelling, was known by the high-sounding title of Chancellorsville.

Thus far every movement had shown unmistakable marks of a great military genius. Thus far unprecedented success had attended every effort, and officers and men began to feel that at last the Army of the Potomac had a head in keeping with its noble body. But alas! at this critical juncture—the moment it became apparent that the enemy had determined to fight rather than flee; our leading star, which had mounted so high and shone with such dazzling brightness, suddenly grew dim. "Our giant has become a pigmy," says one. "Fighting Joe Hooker has lost his head for once," says another. "Was he drunk?" whispers a third. Let us return to the narration of facts.

The remaining troops were not sent to complete the partly formed line. Aids were hurried back to inform Hooker of the state of affairs at the front, and to request that the reserves be

hurried forward; but in their stead came an order for the advance to fall immediately back toward the Chancellor House. "With mingled amazement and incredulity"—writes Swinton in his Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac—"this command was received by the officers, who sent to beg Hooker to allow the army to push on, and hold the front thus gained. It was urged in the warmest terms that the occupation of that fine position would uncover Banks' Ford, thus . . giving easy communication with Sedgwick; that it secured the dominating heights which, if not held, would instantly be seized to his great disadvantage by his antagonist; that it would take the army beyond the densely wooded region in which manœuvring was impossible, and that it would enable it to command the open country on the posterior slope of Fredericksburg Heights, soon to be carried by Sedgwick. It was in vain these considerations, whose supreme importance must be apparent from a moment's glance at the topography of the region, were urged by his ablest advisers." Back the advance had been ordered, and back it came, followed by a shower of shot and shell from half a dozen of the enemy's batteries which had been hurried into position on the very ground they had vacated.

About five o'clock that afternoon our regiment piled knapsacks where they had been resting, and, leaving one man from each company to guard them, moved forward through the woods, until we reached the open space, or Chancellor Farm, where we again halted and stacked arms.

After walking around a few moments I spread my rubber blanket on the ground, and buttoning my coat and wrapping my woollen blanket about me—for it was damp and chilly—lay down and listened to the fitful firing along our front. Just after dark the firing ceased, save now and then a report from the picket line, which ran along the edge of the woods on the opposite side of the clearing. The two divisions which composed the Twelfth corps were there; and now that the strong commanding position to the left had been abandoned, an unknown force of the enemy was in front of them. Presently to the occasional sound of the rifle in front, was added the ceaseless chirping of tree toads from

the woods in our rear. As I lay there listening, and wondering what the morrow would bring forth, Colonel Cummins came along, and being without blankets, readily accepted an invitation to share mine with me, and lay down beside me; then our dog Jack, a regimental pet, crawled under the blanket and coiled himself up between our feet. About ten o'clock, the pickets all of a sudden started a brisk firing, and raising on my elbow I looked across the field just as a streak of light flashed from the opposite woods, followed by the crashing sound of a volley of musketry; then another, and yet another flashing line of light sped from right to left, and from right to left again in quick succession. And following right after and blending with the crash of musketry, came the thunder of a volley of artillery; then another flashing line of light, another crash of musketry, a charging shout, a few straggling shots, and all was quiet again.

Drawing my blanket closer about me, I lay down again, but not to sleep. Ever and anon I would instinctively raise a little, and scan the plain, wondering what it really meant, and was it all over; or was what I had heard and seen but the prelude of something yet to come?

About eleven o'clock, I discovered the dim outline of a man, moving toward me over the plain, and rising to my feet I walked out to meet him. He wore the jacket of an artillery-man and had a bridle in his hand. "My friend," said I, "what was all that firing about?" "What was it about?" he replied, "why the rebs charged our battery." "Did they take it?" I asked. "Well, I reckon not," said he, "and I guess they wish they hadn't tried. You see the word came in just after dark that they were massing uncomfortably near our picket line, and our battery was sent out as a kind of bait, I suppose; then two lines of infantry crept out, and lay down behind us. I don't think the rebs saw our support, and concluded it would be a nice thing to rush out, and gobble us. We had driven out and halted there careless like, just as if we were stopping for the night, but before we lay down to sleep, with one eye open, our growlers were double-shotted with grape, and ready for visitors. Well, you heard them come. They pushed

right over our picket line, out of the woods, and rushed at us, firing a volley as they came. Then we let go. They were four lines deep, and we cut half a dozen swarths clean through them; but they were grit, and closing up, made another dash for our guns, before we had a chance to reload; but before they reached us, our infantry support rushed past, poured a volley point-blank into them, and with a shout charged them back into the woods."

We were now some distance from the regiment, and bidding my artillery-man good night, I hurried back, and crawled under my blanket by the side of the colonel again. About midnight we returned to our knapsacks in the woods, and slept very comfortably there until daylight.

General Hooker had now abandoned the offensive. His defensive line of battle was formed in an irregular quarter-circle, some five miles in length. The left of this line rested on the Rappahannock at Scott's Dam, one and a half miles below United States Ford, and ran from thence in a southerly direction to and across the Fredericksburg turnpike, about half a mile east of the Chancellor House; thence in a westerly direction a short distance in front and parallel with the turnpike, nearly three miles, to the house of one Tully, where the extreme right brigade, with a section of artillery, was thrown back across the road, at right angles with the main line, and faced directly west. This flank, though well posted, was left unprotected by either cavalry or advanced infantry pickets.

The Fifth corps held the left of this line. The Twelfth corps, with Hancock's division of the Second corps on its left, and Birney's division of the Third corps on its right, held the centre; the right was intrusted to the Eleventh corps. French's division of the Second, and Whipple's and Berrie's divisions of the Third corps, were in reserve.

Hooker's head-quarters remained at the Chancellor House, and in the open grounds about it several hundred wagons were parked. Early Saturday morning we heard heavy firing toward our right centre, which gradually spread along the front; but it was not of that furious nature which characterizes an attack in

force. About the middle of the forenoon several shells fell among these wagons, and a few moments later the road which led toward the United States Ford, and ran past where we were lying, was filled with mule teams which were being driven at a dead run for some safe retreat.

Lee was simply feeling our front with a few thousand men, and endeavoring to hold Hooker's attention, while his Lieutenant, General Jackson, put in execution one of the boldest, and as the sequel proves, most successful flank movements of the war.

Through that portion of our line held by Birney's division, and leading south, ran what is known as the Furnace road, from the fact that about a mile and a half beyond, it passed the Catherine Furnace. Along this road ran a small stream called Lewis Creek. About ten A. M. some of Birney's vedettes, looking down this ravine, discovered crossing a bridge about a mile beyond what appeared to be a continuous column of troops moving toward the Union right.

This fact having been communicated to General Sickles, who was never known to remain in the rear when any portion of his command was at the front, he sought and obtained from General Hooker, permission to push out two of his divisions and "look into the matter." Hooker, it was said at the time, inclined to the opinion that Lee's entire army was in full retreat.

About noon, Birney's division, supported by Whipple's, advanced, and Berrie's division moved up and occupied the position in the main line which Birney's men had just vacated. One of Birney's brigades, with a light battery, formed our advance; and hurrying forward, soon came up to what proved to be the rear division of Stonewall Jackson's column, and opening on it with their battery, soon caused those who had not yet crossed the bridge to seek some more distant route. Now let us return to the 124th. Moving out of the woods, we advanced with our division about half a mile down this Furnace road, then leaving the column took a turn to the right, marched a short distance in the woods, relieved some of Birney's pickets, and remained there until about three o'clock. We then formed col-

umn, and after crossing to the opposite side of the road, hurried forward through the woods for several miles and rejoined our division, which was in the act of forming line of battle, under the immediate direction of General Sickles, on the left of Birney's men, who were already in position; having just before our arrival overtaken the rear of Jackson's line, and captured about five hundred of his men; the most of them belonging to the 23d Georgia. The enemy's rear was now uncovered, and Sickles was forming for an attack in force, in hopes of at least capturing a wagon train, which was moving in plain sight. Other Confederate troops were hurrying back to confront us, and before the line was fairly formed, brisk skirmishing began in front of Birney's division. At this juncture the 124th was again detached, and ordered to hasten to a thickly wooded hill some three hundred yards to the right, and support some troops there posted.

We soon reached the hill designated, but did not find the troops we were to support. We were, however, hailed by an aide from General Sickles, with orders to remain there until another aide should arrive to conduct us. The next moment the sound of heavy musketry firing came from the woods in front, and Ellis hurried us forward up the hill; from the crest of which we saw, in the valley beyond, a portion of our division actively engaged with, and apparently giving way before a small force of the enemy. Under such circumstances, Ellis was not the man to wait for orders. Hurriedly forming line of battle and placing himself in front of the colors, he ordered a charge; and with a shout which made the woods ring again, we rushed through the dwarf pines down the slope. As we reached the level ground General Whipple, in person, ordered us to halt, and informed Colonel Ellis that our division was falling back, and directed that the 124th retire with it. Meantime the booming of cannon and crackling of musketry came from the direction of Hooker's main line.

We could not have fallen back more than a mile, when panic-stricken fugitives brought tidings of terrible disaster; and a few moments later we learned the enemy had actually turned the Federal right, routed the Eleventh corps, and was even then

between us and head-quarters. We, however, kept on feeling our way cautiously back, and just after dark emerged from the woods not far from where Birney's division had that morning held position in the main line. There Sickles, in the gathering gloom, as fast as his regiments came in out of the dense woods, hurried them in line of battle. He had now nearly all his artillery with him, and was soon joined by General Pleasanton, with several hundred cavalry.

The rattle of musketry was now close by, and the enemy's lines sweeping everything before them, were advancing rapidly through the darkness right against us; and one of Pleasanton's regiments—the 8th Pennsylvania, about one hundred strong—was ordered to charge through the woods and check them at all hazards, that Sickles might have time to complete his line. The charge was made in gallant style and the Confederates brought to a stand; but in a few moments this little band of horsemen were swept away, their gallant leader, Major Keenan, falling among the foremost; and the elated foe pushed on again. But the check he had received afforded Sickles and Pleasanton time to get their batteries in position, and when the enemy's heavy lines came in sight, over thirty guns opened on them with terrific fury. For a time they withstood our shot and shell, grape and shrapnel, making several desperate, but unsuccessful efforts to reach our guns; but at length gave up the impossible task, and fell rapidly back out of the deadly range. Then Sickles, advancing through the woods, recovered a portion of the line from which the Eleventh corps had been driven, and presently came to another cleared farm, on which he halted, and then drew in and massed a portion of his command. Our brigade, however, moved on across the open space and took position in the edge of the woods beyond.

The right of the 124th now rested on a road which ran at right angles with their line, into the woods in front of them. This road was the Fredericksburg Turnpike, or Orange Plank Road, for at that point the two are merged. The clearing behind us was the Van Wert farm. We were facing the west, and somewhere

in the woods in front lay the enemy. How far he had recoiled was not known, and shortly after our arrival, I was ordered to reconnoitre this road and see what I could find.

Selecting Sergeant Campbell and ten of my best men, I moved with them into the forest. The moon was shedding a dim light, the air had a sulphurous taste, the road was narrow, the trees were tall and stood close together, and the gloom was intense. Quietly and cautiously we crept on along one side of the road in the edge of the woods, stopping at every sound, and peering through the gloom at every shadow. Presently I heard a groan, and a few steps further on, came upon the prostrate form of a poor mangled fellow. Putting my hand on his shoulder I whispered, "What can I do for you?" In answer he mumbled something in German I did not understand. Sending two of my men back with him, we moved on, but were soon again halted by an ominous click. It was not the cocking of a rifle, for it was followed by a peculiar jingling sound. Waving one hand for those immediately behind me to remain where they were, and shading my eyes with the other hand, as if by that act some of the darkness could be shut off, I peered through the gloom, and moved on tiptoe toward a dark moving mass—it was a wounded artillery horse kicking his traces, which were fastened to an upturned caisson. Close by stood another caisson and two rifled guns, which had evidently been abandoned by the Eleventh corps in its flight.

I left two more of my men in charge of these guns, and sent two others back to the regiment. Fighting was no part of our business there; to see all we could, and get back—that was the duty assigned us, and I found so many a hindrance rather than a help. Directing Sergeant Campbell with two men to move in the edge of the woods, on the opposite side of the road, and keeping the remaining two with me, we once more started forward, stepping ever and anon over a dead body; while from the woods all about us came piteous moanings and dying groans of wounded men.

There had been desperate work there. Two tornadoes of fire and iron had just swept through these woods; first from

Jackson's men driving the Eleventh corps; then from Sickles and Pleasanton, forcing Jackson's men back again. About forty yards beyond the abandoned artillery, we were again arrested by a clicking sound, but this time it was followed by the discharge of a rifle. The next moment Sergeant Campbell hastened across the road, and informed me that one of his men, Private James G. Ciles, having advanced beyond the others, had been mistaken for an enemy and wounded by his comrade. This unlucky shot not only deprived me of one of my bravest men, but warned the enemy of our approach, and made our immediate return an absolute necessity. Picking up poor Ciles, whose leg was broken, and would have to be amputated, we hurried back with him, expecting every moment a shower of bullets would sweep down the road after us. Ciles insisted, as we carried him back, that he had seen the enemy's battle line just ahead of him, and that the bullet which hit him came from them. I did not attempt to disabuse him as to who fired the fatal shot, and did not at the time credit his story of having seen the enemy's battle line. On reaching the regiment, we committed him to the care of Dr. Montfort, who had not yet been called to the rear; and ordering the right platoon of my company to shoulder arms, I was about to move back into the woods with them for the purpose of bringing in the guns referred to. Just then bullets began to whistle over the centre of the regiment, giving us unmistakable evidence that the enemy was not far away, and Colonel Ellis ordered me to remain where I was until he drew in his line of pickets, and gave them "a fitting reply in the shape of a volley of Yankee lead." I of course hurried out one of the men who had been with me to call in the guards I had left with the guns. In the meantime Captain Murray, who had been sent on a similar reconnoissance, down a lane that ran through the woods in a left oblique direction from the left of our regimental line, came in and reported that he had come upon a large body of the enemy, who were apparently forming line of battle for an advance. A moment later my attention was drawn to a slight rustling in the road just in front of me, and a horseman rode up and asked, in a

tone of authority, "What regiment is this?" and added, "Colonel, don't fire into your own men," for at that juncture, in reply to another slight shower of bullets which passed over their left, our regiment, without waiting for orders, opened a straggling fire. Colonel Ellis, who at the time stood talking with me, stepped toward the questioner and replied, in a loud voice, "This is the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York, and by —— we will give them shot for shot, friend or foe." Meantime several other horsemen appeared, and drew rein in the shadow of the trees. At Colonel Ellis' gruff answer, this unknown officer whirled and put spurs to his horse, and the whole party dashed in the woods on the farther, or north side of the road, followed by a ball from Colonel Ellis' revolver and a volley from Company A. Just then a dark body of troops appeared, moving over the plain and slowly and silently marched past our right flank, down this same road, and disappeared in the gloom. It was General J. Hobart Ward's brigade, his regiments massed in column of divisions, pushing a section of light guns ahead of them. They could scarcely have gone as far as I had penetrated, when the sudden opening of musketry, joined by the crashing thunder of artillery, told they had met the foe; and for half an hour the woods in our front were filled with hideous noises, and down this road it seemed that some terrible monster was beating the gloom with flashing swords of fire; then gradually all became quiet again and the night wore slowly on.

But who was this strange horseman, with followers, that so suddenly rode out of the gloom, and on learning what troops were there, dashed madly back into the dark woods again, followed by a volley of fifty bullets, just as Ward's brigade, with two pieces of artillery, moved down this road? Was it Stonewall Jackson who inquired "What regiment is this," and added, "don't fire into your own men?"

Southern historians and Jackson's biographers agree that it was in these night attacks of Pleasanton and Sickles, at the very point where these strange horsemen turned in the woods, that Jackson and several of his followers were mortally wounded

—by the fire of his own men, they say. There was a superstitious belief, entertained by the bulk of Jackson's men, growing out of the fact that he had passed through so many battles unscathed, that he led a charmed life, and no Northern bullet could harm him.

Professor R. L. Dabney, D. D., of the Union Theological Seminary, Virginia, in his work entitled, "Life and Campaigns of Lieutenant-General Thomas J. Jackson," writes, referring to the circumstances attending the wounding of that general, as follows: "Colonel Cobb . . coming to report to him . . . found General Jackson near the road, busily engaged correcting the partial disorder into which his men had fallen; riding along the line, he was saying, 'Men, get into line, get into line. Whose regiment is this, Colonel, get your men into line.'" Let me repeat here what was said by the strange horseman who visited us: "Whose regiment is this," and then, "Colonel, don't fire into your own men."

A little farther along in his narrative, Professor Dabney continues: "He was almost unattended . . . and a moment after rode along the turnpike toward Chancellorsville, endeavoring to discover the intentions of the enemy. His anticipations were indeed verified, Hooker was just then advancing a powerful body of fresh troops . . . He was pushing a strong battery along the highway, preceded by infantry skirmishers; and in front of General Jackson's right, was sending a heavy line of infantry through the woods. . . After the general and his escort had proceeded down the road a hundred yards, they were surprised by a volley of musketry from the right, which spread toward their front until the bullets began to whistle among them and struck several horses . . He therefore turned to ride hurriedly back to his own troops; and to avoid the fire which was thus far limited to the south side of the road, he turned into the woods upon the north side. . . As the party approached to within twenty paces of the Confederate troops; these evidently taking them for Federal cavalry, stooped and delivered a deadly fire. . . Several fell dead upon the spot, and

more were wounded. Among the latter was General Jackson." And now a few extracts from a work, entitled "Chancellorsville," by Captain Hopkins and Colonel Allen, both members, at the time, of Jackson's staff.

"General Jackson, while waiting for Hill, rode forward to reconnoitre; he was accompanied by a portion of his staff, and by several other officers. When he had ridden some distance beyond his pickets, and was near the Van Wert House; some one remarked, 'General, you should not expose yourself.' . . He was now in close proximity to the Federal lines, and on the advance of their pickets he turned and rode, with an escort, toward his own troops. The skirmishers on both sides were firing as Jackson approached his lines; he with his escort received a volley from the Confederate line of battle. . . The Federal line was near by, and advancing. Two pieces of artillery had been advanced on the Plank road, and were going into position not one hundred yards off. The General, having been raised from the ground, was supported a few steps by Captain Leigh, and then placed on a litter. He had been carried but a little way in this manner, when the Federal artillery opened, and a perfect storm swept down this road."

Again I put the question, "Was the officer who rode out of the woods and asked 'What regiment is this,' Stonewall Jackson?" Let others answer as they may, in my mind there is not the slightest doubt of it; but as to whether his mortal hurt was caused by one of the bullets the 124th sent after him as he rode away, or by that of one of his own men as he returned to them, is not so clear. This much is certain; his fall was a blow from which the army of Northern Virginia never recovered.

After this night attack, in which J. Hobart Ward's brigade played so active a part, and which resulted in re-establishing the Union lines, Sickles reported in person to General Hooker at the Chancellor House, and was ordered to cause his command to fall back half a mile nearer head-quarters, where a new right wing was to be formed, mainly of his corps. At early dawn this movement began, but our regiment, which brought up the rear, had

gone only a few rods. when Ellis, in obedience to orders, directed me to return with Companies A and F, cover the line from which our division had just been withdrawn, and remain there until recalled. Ordering them from the column and hurriedly deploying Company F and a portion of Company A in skirmish line at long intervals, and retaining the remainder of Company A as a reserve, I returned with them to the edge of the woods.

A few moments later, I heard some one behind me ask, "Captain Weygant, what orders have you?" and turning around, saw before me, unattended and on foot, our division commander, General Whipple. In reply to his inquiry I answered, "Our orders are to remain where we are until withdrawn." "Oh! no! no!" said he, "check them a little if possible, and then make your escape—if you can. Don't you hear them; they are already advancing;" and drawing his cloak about him and hurrying to his horse, which I then discovered was being held by an orderly near by, he mounted and rode rapidly away.

He was right! Looking down the road, I discovered that it was filled with moving artillery, and through the woods could be seen their advance line of infantry. At this juncture my weak line of skirmishers opened fire, but its only perceptible effect was to hasten the approach of the enemy who, without deigning to return a shot, hastened forward. Company F and the few men of A who were with them, stood their ground—never did a skirmish line behave better, or were muzzle-loading rifles fired more rapidly; but on came the solid lines of the foe, who, when I ordered my skirmishers to fall back on their reserve, were not forty yards away. Stray bullets, evidently fired without orders, now began to whistle among us, and just as the enemy emerged from the woods in front and on either side of us, the men of my two little companies, excepting two poor fellows of F who were hit on their way back, came together in battle line, in front of them. Then for the first time I had visions of rebel prisons. There we stood, on the open ground, one hundred facing ten thousand. A single volley would have swept us out of existence. Glancing to the rear I noticed that near at hand,

a slight ravine ran round a knoll, and whispered the order, "Every man for his life."

Well—I had always contended, and really believed, that I could outrun any man in Company A, or F either, and bounding off at a tremendous gait attempted to lead, but before I had made ten paces, two-thirds of them were ahead of me; and before the enemy mistrusted we would attempt to escape, all but two or three of our number were out of their immediate range. But the dreaded volley, when it did come—though the leaden messengers passed harmlessly over the heads of the rest of us—caught our hindermost man, W. V. C. Carmer, of F, whose body must have been riddled. He was never heard from afterward.

A moment later, Sickles' artillery opened in a most furious manner, and the shells went screeching past us and crashing into the woods beyond. Then the Confederate batteries, hurrying into position, began to reply, and the missiles from their guns passed so near our heads that several of our number were hurled to the ground by the force of the wind which followed them. We were caught between the lines, and the terrible Sunday morning's battle of Chancellorsville burst over us. Turn right or left, grim death stared at us. The heavens above seemed filled with hot-breathed, shrieking demons. Behind us was an advancing sheet of flame, and the hills in front opposed an angry line of fire and smoke. Two or three times we halted and threw ourselves upon the ground, but as the Confederate host drew near, we pushed on again toward Sickles' front, and at length crawled in between his guns; and with faces once more toward the foe, lay down with loaded rifles to await such further duty as we should be called upon, or it might seem necessary to perform.

Our situation there soon became more terrible than it had been between the lines. The knoll beneath us shook like a thing of life. The air was deadened by the continuous booming of guns, which covered the high ground all about us, and ceased not to eject the huge doses of powder and iron which begrimed cannoneers continually rammed down their black, gaping throats. Thick, stifling clouds of smoke rolled back over us, filled with

fragments of bursting shells which tore up the ground all around and among us, mangling the bodies of the gallant men of the old Third corps who almost covered it, and whose dying groans mingled in horrid discord with the piteous whinnyings of wounded beasts and the shrill shouts of those who were conducting the fight. Soon whistling bullets from the desperate foe added new horrors to the scene, and then a bursting caisson lighted up that portion of the field, and turned to blackened corpses nearly a score of men who stood about it. As the thunder of this explosion died away, I heard amid the tumult, in the familiar words and voice of Ellis, the order, "Forward, my tulips," and saw moving away through the smoke, our regimental colors.

At the sound of Ellis' voice, my little band sprang to their feet—but not all; some of them would rise no more until the last trump should call them. I repeated the order "Forward," and we started off at a double-quick after our flag, reaching the left of the column just as it was changing to a line of battle at the edge of a piece of woods, out of which a Union regiment, larger by far than ours, had just been driven.

As A and F hurried along in rear of the other companies, to their proper position on the right of the line, Colonel Ellis, seeing us, shouted out, "Good! good! Weygant; I was sure you had all gone to kingdom come;" adding, "let the little girls of old Orange hear a good report of this day's work." As he spoke George Weygant, of Company I, threw up his arms and fell dead just ahead of me, and at the same instant one of my own company, John H. Judson, with a shout on his lips was pierced through the brain, and fell backward out of the light of life into the gloom of death. Reaching the right and glancing toward the front as I dressed my men, I saw our adjutant, Will Bronson, who was several paces in front of us, spring to a stump and wave his sword; but the next instant a little minie ball tumbled him off, and on one foot he hobbled past me on his way to the rear.

Advancing through the woods directly toward us, was the 23d North Carolina, supported by another North Carolina

regiment; both of which were under command of Colonel David H. Christie of the 23d. Thus far these Carolinians had swept away everything in front of them, but the terrific opening fire of the 124th, which was poured into their ranks when they were less than fifty yards off, not only brought the men of the 23d to a halt, but caused them to fall with their faces to the ground to escape its withering effect; and the principal part of the immediately answering bullets came from their supporting line, which was but a few yards farther away. In less than ten minutes this second line was brought to the ground, and the men of the first line sprang to their feet again, and poured into our ranks a most wicked volley, which frightfully decimated, but failed to shake our line—and so the fight went on. Some of our men grew ghostly pale as their eyes fell upon gasping and bullet-pierced faces of fallen comrades. Some cursed the foe as they bit their cartridges, and with single thrust of ramrod "sent them home." And yet others, as they brought down their rifle, and moved their right hand rapidly toward their cartridge-box, for another bullet, turned their eyes heavenward, as if appealing for protection or success to the great I AM.

The battle was now at its height, and the 124th was in the thickest of the fray, but not a son of Orange county was seen to show the white feather, not a man faltered; deliberately they aimed and rapidly fired; for not one moment did they cease pouring their leaden hail into the enemy's ranks; neither did that enemy for one moment cease to return his withering, destructive fire. Backward, forward, down, down, our brave men fell; thinner and yet thinner grew the ranks, but not a foot of ground was yielded. One after another, our file closers, not needed in the rear, stepped forward unordered into the continually widening gaps of the first rank; and at last the enemy's double line of battle, unable to longer withstand our accurate deadly fire, gave up their desperate efforts to force us from the line and fell back out of range, leaving the ground in front of us strewn with his dead. But the bullets of unseen foes, coming in oblique directions, continued to fall thick and fast among us, and soon another

Confederate line was seen off at our right, advancing through the woods toward us. Our yet deadly fire was instantly turned toward the new-comers; but our cartridges were running low. On the left of the regiment, Captain Murray, of B, with great streams of blood oozing from mouth, ears and nose, and apparently lifeless, was being borne to the rear on the strong shoulders of private George Hawley; and Company K's newly appointed lieutenant, Jacob E. Denton, lay dead among the fallen sons of Wallkill.

On the right, the captain of Company A having been slightly wounded in the head early in the action, had become so weak and pale from loss of blood, that one of his men, private Joseph Gardner, forgetting that dead men did not continue to walk about, was heard to shout, "My God! my God! our captain's dead! our captain's dead." Lieutenant Daniel Sayer, of D, had been wounded in the hand, and ordered from the field, and Lieutenant Quick, of F, who had lead Company I into the fight, had, in consequence of a wound in the facé, given place to young Crissey of Company A.

In the centre, Captain Crist, of H, unmindful of the fact that his course up and down in rear of his company was marked by blood which continually trickled from a wound in his chin, was cheering his little company of twenty-four men—all that remained, able to handle a musket, of the fifty who, half an hour before, had constituted its rank and file. Of the thirty-four men with which Company C had opened fire, only eighteen could now be counted in front of the tall, lank form of Captain Silliman, who yet towered unscathed above them. Of the nine brave non-commissioned officers, who constituted our color guard, which, under the immediate command of Lieutenant James A. Grier, stood between C and H and marked the centre of our regimental line, five had fallen; two of them while holding aloft the flag they loved so well. Lieutenant-Colonel Cummins was moving rapidly about in rear of the right wing, now shaking his sword and shouting, "Give them thunder, boys, give them thunder," and now ordering some excited wounded man to cease making a fool of himself and get to the rear, while he had strength to take him

there. In rear of the left wing walked Major Cromwell, with sword at a shoulder, saying little but looking much. About twenty feet behind the colors stood Colonel Ellis, with folded arms and cap front turned up. His eagle eye had just discovered that ours were the only Union colors remaining on all that portion of what had been the Federal front which came within his view. Not a Union soldier was to be seen on our right; the long line on our left had fallen back out of sight; even the batteries which had been in our rear were gone, and the enemy's solid lines were moving past both our flanks.

To have remained longer would have resulted in certain capture and Ellis reluctantly, and for the first time when actually engaged with the enemy, issued to his regiment the order, "Fall back;" at which Private James Bovell—a gray-haired man of Company I, who had already received three wounds, but yet remained in the ranks—cried out, "For shame, for shame, don't let's play the coward now. I'll stay and fight it out alone."

Over a hundred of our disabled comrades had already staggered off, or been borne bleeding to the rear, and nearly as many more lay dead, dying, or helpless, along the line we were leaving. Steadily the regiment fell back, carrying as many as they could of their badly wounded with them. The air now seemed filled with messengers of death. As we crossed a little stream which ran a few rods in rear of where our line had been, I saw Corporal Joseph Davey, of A, who a few moments before had started for the rear wounded in the leg, fall headlong from the effect of a shell which passed near him. As some friend grasped him by the left arm I took hold of his right, and we assisted him to his feet again, but before he had taken a single step a shell burst just above our heads, apparently jerking him from our hands, just as a bullet hit him in the face, causing him to turn a complete somerset; I supposed he was dead, but the next moment saw him crawling off on his hands and knees. In the meantime Lieutenant Henry Gowdy, of H, who had been commanding Company E, fell mortally wounded.

The regiment was now moving back quite rapidly, but their day's work was not yet completed. Coming to a road they met the disorganized fragments of two or three regiments, which one of our corps staff officers was endeavoring to rally for a charge. Seeing the 124th, this officer called on it, in the name of General Sickles, to retake the works from which one of our batteries, having fired its last round of ammunition, had just been driven. Ellis, with no other reply than "Hi, hi, my Orange Blossoms," gave the order; at which our wounded were dropped in the road, and our gallant Major Cromwell, springing to the front, took position ten paces ahead of the colors to lead the charge. Hastily fixing bayonets the regiment once more, with a wild hurrah! rushed forward at their foes; driving them pell-mell over the works, capturing some, and opening a deadly fire on those who fled.

And here, in the works they had regained, the sons of Orange County remained until, like the battery which had stood there before them, their last round of ammunition was exhausted—until everything in their rear was gone, and once more the flag presented to them at Goshen, by the Ladies of Orange County, and which Ellis promised the donors should never be disgraced, was the only emblem of liberty in sight; while the stars and bars of the Confederates waved in front and on either side of them. Then was Ellis again forced to repeat the order "Fall back," and the regiment retired toward the new Union line which was being rapidly reformed a quarter of a mile further to the rear, leaving their route over the plain marked by the blood and bodies of yet another score of Orange County's bravest sons.

Just before the regiment reached this new line, it came upon Meagher's Irish brigade, which, it was said, had been directed to prepare for a bayonet charge. They were lying down, and the 124th was ordered to form in their rear and support them. A few moments later one of Sickles' batteries, having been resupplied with ammunition, took position but a short distance away. The enemy's artillery fire was now most terrific, and ere long another bursting caisson shook the earth, and filled the air

with fragments of wood and iron, many of which fell among Meagher's men and some of them along the line of the 124th.

The enemy had halted beyond the range of our infantry, and after an hour or so the artillery firing on both sides almost entirely ceased. But we remained on the open plain until nearly four P. M., when Meagher's brigade was withdrawn and the 124th moved through, and took position behind a long line of artillery which composed the apex, or centre and most advanced portion of the new main line. At dusk the enemy made a feeble attempt, with an inconsiderable force, to reach these guns, but was speedily hurled back; and the bloody battle of Chancellorsville—so far as that portion of the Union army immediately under Hooker was concerned—was virtually at an end. Just after dark that night, the 124th was ordered out on picket in front of our batteries, relieving Berdan's sharp-shooters; and there—while thousands of fresh troops who had not fired a shot, lay quietly in the woods in our rear—we passed another sleepless night.

At daybreak Monday morning, we were relieved, and on moving behind the batteries again, were forthwith set to work digging rifle-pits. Here we were harassed continually by rebel sharp-shooters. Every few moments we could hear a ball whistle past, and occasionally a thud, which told that some one was hit.

About ten A. M. Andrew M. Boyd, of Company C, while at work in the pits was severely wounded; and before noon three more of our number had been picked off. About two o'clock I met General Whipple, who, on seeing me, inquired as to how seriously I was wounded, and congratulated me on my fortunate escape from the picket line on Sunday morning. He then walked on a few yards and entered into conversation with a lieutenant of the 86th New York, who was leaning against a large tree with his arm in a sling. Presently I heard another thud, and hastily turning round to learn if any of the 124th had been struck, saw the general, who was not more than five rods away, reel and fall in the arms of a soldier who sprang for-

ward to catch him, and before I could reach the spot he was being borne away. His hurt was mortal, and but few of the officers or men of his division—many of whom had learned not only to respect but to love him—ever saw his face again. A few moments after the fall of our general, Colonel Berdan went out with a small squad of picked men, and soon cleared the woods in our front of the enemy's dreaded marksmen, whom they found posted in the tops of several high trees. Berdan's men on their return brought with them, as trophies, three telescopic rifles, one of which surpassed in point of workmanship anything of the kind I had ever seen.

Monday night we were permitted to sleep, but not undisturbed. Several times before morning dawned the firing on the picket line in front of us became so severe that we were called up and ordered to prepare for action. But on each occasion, after we had stood under arms a few moments, the unusual racket died away and we were permitted to lie down again. Tuesday we worked at our rifle-pits, cleared up the grounds behind them, and pitched our tents. During the morning and middle of the day, the sun shone warm and bright, but about four o'clock a heavy storm set in. At eight that evening we were ordered to strike tents, and for six hours we stood under arms in a drenching rain, waiting for the order "Forward." At two o'clock it came, and we moved about ten rods to a road which led toward the river, but it was jammed so full of troops that for an hour or more we could get but a few feet at a time. After that the road became cleared, and we moved off at a brisk gait, which was soon increased to a double-quick, and ere long to a run—if it be possible for a column of troops to maintain for five miles a gait which can be called a run, through mud ten inches deep. Arriving at the ford, we found there a multitude of troops. Two bridges spanned the river, across each of which two columns were hurrying. Hooker's grand army was in full retreat, and at two P. M. the 124th was back at its old camp near Falmouth.

Having, since the commencement of the Sunday morning's

engagement, confined our narrative to individual experiences and some of the most striking events which came within range of our personal sight and hearing, we will now, in order to a better understanding of just where the 124th was, and what it accomplished at Chancellorsville, devote a few pages to the more general features of that—on the part of General Hooker—superbly planned but wretchedly fought battle.

When, at early dawn on the 3d, General Sickles had withdrawn to the new position assigned him, Hooker's defensive line, composed of not less than seventy thousand men, was over eight miles in extent, with its flanks resting on the Rappahannock, and about three miles apart. Our pontoon bridges remained stretched across the river at United States Ford, about midway of the points on the river bank where these flanks rested. The Fifth corps, under Meade, held the left, and had thrown up a light line of earthworks along a portion of its front. The First corps, the largest on the field, commanded by Reynolds, held the right, with all of Howard's Eleventh corps that Jackson had not disposed of the day before, massed in its rear. The line of the Fifth corps extended two and a half miles; that of the First corps about three and a half miles. The right of the Fifth corps and the left of the First corps rested within half a mile of each other. They were in form of a letter V with the point cut off, thus ⋁. About half a mile in front of the smaller opening stood the Chancellor House. The centre—composed of the Third corps under Sickles, the Twelfth corps under Slocum, and Hancock's and French's divisions of Couch's Second corps—was thrust out around the Chancellor House nearly in the form of three sides of a square. The left of the Second corps connected with the right of the Fifth, and was faced toward the east. The left of the Twelfth corps connected with the right of the Second, and was faced toward the south. The left of the Third corps connected with the right of the Twelfth, faced toward the west, and was evidently regarded by Hooker as virtually the right of his main line. Sickles' extreme right flank rested about one mile in

advance and west of the left flank of the First corps, which was considered in reserve.

The battle consisted technically in Lee's driving this extended three-sided centre back, through, and into the opening between the First and Fifth corps. For the accomplishing of this object the Confederate attacking line was, during the latter part of the night, disposed in front of the Union centre as follows: Drawn up in a single line, and facing the Second and Twelfth corps, were the divisions of McLaws and Anderson. These two divisions were about equal in numbers to the Federal corps they confronted.

Fifteen brigades—composed of seventy powerful regiments of Jackson's corps, numbering upward of thirty thousand men, now commanded by General Stuart—were formed in three lines for an attack in force, in the woods in front of the Third corps, which consisted of less than fifteen thousand men. Sickles' front, which it will be remembered was not fully formed until after Stuart had begun to advance, was composed of the divisions of Birney and Berry, and one brigade of Whipple's division. Whipple's second brigade, which was composed of Berdan's two small regiments of sharp-shooters, numbering all told less than five hundred men, was deployed in a skirmish line which connected with the right flank of Sickles' battle line, and ran toward the left flank of the First corps. Whipple's remaining brigade, to which the 124th belonged, was drawn up as a reserve.

The battle opened with the impetuous advance of Jackson's corps at four A. M. As soon as his triple line arrived in Sickles' immediate front, Stuart discovered the break in the Union line, which left the right flank of the Third corps exposed; and forthwith, while pressing the attack in front, hurried Iverson's brigade forward from his rear line, and hurling it against this exposed flank, forced back with considerable loss a portion of Sickles' extreme right brigade. It was at this juncture, and to meet this flank attack, that our brigade was hurried forward, and formed in line of battle at right angles with, and thrown

back from Sickles' front; and the 124th became engaged with the two regiments of Iverson's brigade, under command of Colonel David H. Christie.

The first duty to be performed by Stuart's column, was the forcing of Sickles from his strong position—which would render that portion of the line held by the Second and Twelfth corps untenable. This, with the assistance of several brigades from in front of Couch and Slocum, he finally accomplished, after a most desperate four hours' struggle, in which, according to reliable Southern accounts, Jackson's corps alone lost seven thousand men. Throughout this desperate struggle, though three corps remained inactive and Sickles repeatedly called for help, not a man was sent to his assistance. And at last, when half his regiments and nearly every one of his batteries had run out of ammunition, his shattered line gave way, and the Second and Twelfth corps were speedily forced, with heavy loss, to follow it.

"At dawn," writes Colonel Allen, Jackson's chief of ordnance, "Archer and McGowen were ordered to move forward . . . They became almost immediately engaged, and General Stuart, without waiting further, ordered the whole corps to attack. Soon the battle became general along the whole line. . . Sickles extended to the creek, and held the elevated plateau at Hazel Grove." And then, after detailing at length the tide of battle on Sickles' left and centre, and referring to the first successes of Colonels Hall and Christie, with portions of Rhodes' and Iverson's brigades on the Federal right, continues: "The Union troops now quickly concentrated their fire. . . and Hall and Christie were forced back with heavy loss. . . The flower of Sickles' corps long and stoutly resisted the Confederate advance. The batteries at Fairview poured a ceaseless storm of shell and case into the attacking column."

Professor Dabney, in his Life of Jackson, writes, "When the general onset was ordered by Stuart, the Stonewall brigade advanced, with the cry, 'Charge; and remember Jackson.' Even as they moved from their position, their general, Paxton, was

struck dead where he stood. . . In three hours seven thousand men were killed and wounded from the corps."

It is conceded by all historians, that the severest and principal part of the fighting at Chancellorsville, on Sunday, was done by Jackson's corps under Stuart, on the one side, and the Third corps, under Sickles, on the other. The loss of the Third corps in killed and wounded on Saturday and Sunday, was a trifle over four thousand men. It lost no prisoners, except some of its severely wounded, who are included in the above four thousand. It lost no battle flags and brought off every piece of its artillery. It inflicted on the enemy a much heavier loss in killed and wounded than it received. It captured seven of his battle flags, over a thousand of his able-bodied prisoners, and recovered at least two of the guns lost by the Eleventh corps.

After the Sunday morning's battle had ended, Hooker had drawn up in an almost faultless line nearly sixty thousand troops, half of whom had not been called upon to fire a shot; while Lee could not have mustered in front of him thirty thousand able-bodied men, and yet Hooker remained inactive for two days, and allowed Lee to move off to Fredericksburg with the bulk of his shattered army, and assist the troops which had been left there in dealing a staggering blow to Sedgwick's detached Sixth corps. Strangely conducted battle! With seventy thousand troops about Chancellorsville not over twenty-five thousand engaged, and these drawn out in a single line, and not relieved or reinforced from the beginning of the battle until its close. The enemy allowed to outnumber us in the fight two to one while we in reality had double his numbers in the field.

Surely, taking the Third corps with its civilian general as a sample, Hooker told the truth when he said he had under him the finest army on the planet. But what shall that army say of its general? Simply what was said of Burnside? Shall we say of Hooker that he had waded beyond his depth—could command a corps but not an army? Yes! if you will; let it go at that. The result must ever remain the same, let the cause be what it may. A hundred thousand whipped by fifty thousand was it?

No! no! Rather say twenty-five thousand holding off, beating back with terrible slaughter, fifty thousand, hour after hour; until at last their ammunition gives out and they are compelled to retire to their inner lines to replenish, while forty-five thousand stand idly looking on—not of their own accord, but simply because he who commands them will not order them forward. The Army of the Potomac, defeated by the Army of Northern Virginia was it? No! Hooker whipped by Lee, shall we say? Yes!

There will be found recorded elsewhere in this work, such interesting facts as I have been able to collect, concerning the wounding, suffering, death, or personal experiences of each individual whose name appears in the following

LIST OF KILLED, WOUNDED, AND MISSING OF THE 124TH AT THE BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE.

ADJUTANT WILLIAM BRONSON, *wounded.*

COMPANY A.

Killed.

James G. Ciles.
John H. Judson.
William Odell.

Wounded.

CAPT. C. H. WEYGANT.
SERGT. S. T. Rollings.
SERGT. Peter Rose.
CORP. Joseph Davey.
CORP. John W. Taylor.
CORP. Abram Bellows.
Richard Rollings.
Henry Arcularius.

Missing.

John H. Warford.
Newton Gotchieus.
Robert Potter.
John Lewis.

COMPANY F.

Killed.

CORP. A. S. Barkley.
William V. C. Carmer.
P. A. F. Hanaka.
Barney F. Kean.
A. J. McCarty.
Ira Wilcox.
T. H. Jefrey.

Wounded

John G. Ogg.
LIEUT. T. J. QUICK.
CORP. Charles Peters.
C. B. Anderson.
H. R. Broadhead.
J. Cunningham.

Missing.

Reuben Doty.
Jacob Garrison.
Job M. Snell.
Charles P. Kirk.
John T. Fisher.
I. G. Gillson.
G. W. Adams.

COMPANY D.

Killed.

CORP. F. A. Benedict.
Zopher Wilson.
Joseph Brooks.

Wounded.

LIEUT. DANIEL SAYER.
Jesseniah Dolson.
John M. Garrison.
William L. Becraft.
George W. Decker.
William H. Tomar.
Norman L. Dill.
John K. Clark.

Missing.

Joel McCann.
J. F. Quackenbush.
Coleman Morris.
Olander A. Humphrey.
William McGarrah.
Carl G. Hoffman.
Daniel P. Dugan.

COMPANY I.

Killed.

CORP. William Wallace.
Cortland Bodine.
J. P. Wightman.
George Weygant.
William Hamilton.
James Cooper.

Wounded.

SERGT. Charles Stewart.
CORP. Samuel McQuaid.
CORP. A. P. Millspaugh.
James C. Haggerty.
Joseph Hanna.
William Milligan.
John Hamil.
Jeduthan Millspaugh.
Rensalaer D. Baird.
James Bovell.
Robert Wilson.
James S. Barrett.
David Storms.
Patrick Ryan.
David Loughridge.
J. H. McCallister.
Anson Hamilton.

COMPANY C.

Killed.

COLOR SERGT. T. Foley.
CORP. Charles Chatfield.
James H. Barnes.
Robert Rush.
Samuel Dodge.
Charles H. Goodsall.
James D. Tilton.
David L. Westcott.
James A. Ward.

Wounded.

CORP. Charles Knapp.
CORP. Daniel O'Hara.
Thomas Rodman.
William Bodenstein.
Frederick Dezendorf.
Peter Conklin.
Ephraim Tompkins.
Andrew M. Boyd.
Albert Wise.
John Thompson.
Daniel S. Gardner.
James E. Daniels.
John W. Foley.

Missing.

Clark Smith, Jr.

COMPANY H.

Killed.

LIEUT. HENRY GOWDY.
SEGT. John Rowland.
SERGT. A. R. Rhinehart.
CORP. W. L. Fairchild.
CORP. David Mould.
George O. Fuller.
Charles A. Foster.
Joseph W. Delamater.
Van Keuren Crist.

Wounded.

CAPT. DAVID CRIST.
SERGT. William H. Cox.
CORP. Theron Bodine.
CORP. Benjamin Dutcher.
CORP. John R. Post.
Noah Kimbark.
David D. Post.
S. S. Youngblood.
Henry Mathews.
William Brown.
Charles Seaman.
Charles A. McGregor.
Josiah Dawson.
Thomas H. Baker.
Grandison Judson.
James Crist.
John McCann.
Abram Hawley.
Andrew Bowman.
Daniel Carman.

COMPANY E.

Killed.

CORP. Wm. J. Daley.
Josiah Harris.
Charles Newell.
John C. Staples.

Wounded.

1ST SERGT. T. M. Robinson.
SERGT. William Price.
CORP. Hiram Ketchum.
CORP. Adam W. Miller.
CORP. Moses Crist.
Abraham Rogers.
Edward Glenn.
William L. Dougherty.
Charles M. Everett
Adam W. Beakes.
Judson Kelley.

COMPANY K.

Killed.

LIEUT. JACOB DENTON.
Gordon B. Cox.
N. B. Mullen.
A. W. Miller.

Wounded.

1ST SERGT. L. S. Wisner.
SERGT. W. T. Ogden.
CORP. D. Carpenter.
CORP. G. Van Sciver.
CORP. S. W. Smith.
Alonzo Price.
Jacob E. Smith.
David U. Quick.
Egbert S. Puff.
Stephen B. Kerr.
Samuel Malcomb.
Cornelius Crans.
Daniel E. Webb.
John O'Brien.
R. McCartney.
Cornelius Herron.
W. W. Bailey.
Sylvanus Grier.
N. J. Conklin.
Wm. H. H. Wood.
Paul Holliday.
John W. Pitts.

Missing.

John W. Parks.

COMPANY G.

Killed.

SERGT. F. F. Wood.
George W. Coleman.
Eli Hughes.
William Rake.
William Hauxhurst.
Peter Higgins.

Wounded.

SERGT. H. J. Estabrook.
CORP. Daniel S. White.
CORP. George W. Odell.
CORP. Lewis P. Miller.
CORP. Alexander Jones.*
Patrick Touhey.
Abram Stalter.
William Fosbury.
John M. Calyer.
Cyrenius Giles.
William E. Cannon.
Alexander Trainer.
Joseph Miller.
Hector Finney.

Missing.

CORP. S. T. Estabrook.
Grant B. Benjamin.

COMPANY B.

Killed.

SERGT. Wm. Valentine.
CORP. Henry O. Smith.
George Shawcross.
William Snyder.
E. N. Laine.

Wounded.

CAPT. H. S. MURRAY.
SERGT. R. R. Murray.
SERGT. Coe L. Reevs
R. J. Holland.
Ezra F. Tuthill.
Hugh McShane.
George Culver.
Herman Crans.
A. J. Messenger.
J. J. Messenger.
D. McCormick.

Missing.

CORP. Francis Lee.

Not more than three-fourths of the number whose names appear under the heading "Killed," expired while the battle was raging. Several lingered, entirely helpless, on the field for days without food or drink. Two or three died in the hands of their enemies; and yet others, after undergoing untold sufferings, and submitting unmurmuringly to the torture of probe and knife and saw, breathed their last, after their mangled bodies had been carried to our division hospital at Aquia Creek.

* The names of Corporal Alexander Jones, of Company G, and private John W. Foley, of Company C, were unintentionally omitted from the list of present for duty on pages 98 and 100

Colonel Ellis, in his official report of the part taken by the 124th in this battle, refrains from special mention of any one, but speaks in the following general terms of the behavior of those under him: "Our men fought like tigers, cheering loudly, but falling fast. The officers *without exception* standing up to their duty and encouraging their commands." But in the following extract from a letter written by him to the Hon. C. H. Winfield, a day or two after the battle, and which went the rounds of our local press at the time, he is more specific.

"On Saturday night (previous to the Sunday's fight) the regiment lay on picket on the skirt of a wood, and an unknown force of the enemy—the same who had routed the Eleventh corps—were somewhere within. A rude road ran from each flank of the regiment into this wood. I was ordered by the commanding general to send a party out to explore each road; it was hazardous and required skilful officers. I sent Captain Weygant, of Newburgh, Company A, and ten men on the right, and Captain Murray, Company B, of Goshen, on the left, with eight men. Captain Weygant presently returned. He had found . . . two caissons and a gun captured from us that afternoon and abandoned by the enemy, and, taking possession of them, advanced about one-fourth of a mile without meeting the enemy. Captain Murray came in . . . and reported that deploying his men and keeping in the shadow, he had advanced about a mile and, unperceived, had come on a large force of the enemy, who were preparing columns of attack or defence. This report was forwarded to the commanding General and proved of service in the advance shortly after made by General Birney, who brought in the caissons and guns already referred to. This was a very hazardous scout and well performed, as the woods were alive with enemies concealed in the darkness; and we subsequently exchanged several volleys with them at intervals during the night. When the Sunday fight began, it was necessary, from the unexpected appearance of a Rebel regiment on our right, which was unsupported, to change front on the centre. The movement was executed as on parade, the brave Captain Silliman, of Corn-

wall, Company C, throwing out his guide, and dressing his company to the right in the midst of a heavy fire; but it was amusing to see the men stepping backward: not one would face about and expose his back to the foe for the few moments necessary for the manœuvre. Captain Silliman, conspicuous for his height, displayed great gallantry; waving his sword above his head he ever encouraged his men, and kept his eye on the colors, of which he had charge, his being the color company. Thrice was the color-bearer shot down, but the darling flag never touched the ground, and was finally taken by Corporal Hazen of Goshen, Company B, who bore it gallantly the remainder of the day. The Newburgh Company I, fought with much coolness and deliberate aim, and their commander, little Cressey, son of our New Windsor parson, was dancing around on the broad grin, seemingly amused as well as interested. While the regiment was lying down behind and supporting a battery, they were exposed to a perfect storm of bursting shells. Many were hit, but none uttered a sound; those killed died as they lay, and when the regiment arose to advance on the enemy, several of the Orange Blossoms * remained prone on their faces. May the Creator receive their brave souls. During the above shelling, Captain Benedict, of Warwick, Company D, was reclining on his elbow; a discharge of grape, about a bucketful, ploughed up the ground and threw some on him; he looked around and muttered something, I did not hear what; but he would have moved more if a hen in scratching had thrown a little dirt on him. Captain Weygant, of Newburgh Company A, was grazed in the head by a ball, which, though not dangerous, was painful; covered with blood he remained cheering his men, and when exhausted by fatigue and loss of blood, got on a yellow pack-mule he found, and did great service as a kind of adjutant. Adjutant Bronson was shot through the leg—the first one hit. I did not see him, being in a

* The sobriquet *Orange Blossoms* was not generally applied to the regiment until after the publication in our county papers of the above extract. It was first used by Colonel Ellis during the battle of Chancellorsville. Previous to that time our friends at home occasionally spoke of us as the National Guard, but we were known in the army only as the 124th New York Volunteers.

different direction at the time. While lying in the rifle-pits, we were annoyed by sharp-shooters firing at a great elevation; we would not hear the report of the gun, only the sharp 'chirp' of the rifle-ball, and an occasional thud told that some one was hit. I heard distinctly the ball strike General Whipple; we lost several men here. Lieutenant Grier, of Cornwall, Company C, was an object of especial interest to the Rebs. His clothes were pierced over and over, but he came off with a whole skin. Grier was one of the original Company I, 71st regiment, and fought bravely at Bull Run."

CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER CHANCELLORSVILLE—BEVERLEY'S FORD.

MAY 7th.—We are just beginning to realize the extent of our loss. Nearly half our log huts are roofless, and hardly a squad (that is four men who tented together) remains intact. This has been the most gloomy day of our existence as a regiment. The men go about silently, or speaking almost in whispers, with faces expressive of most intense sadness; and if you watch them closely, you may ever and anon detect some stalwart fellow stealthily brushing an unbidden tear from his bronzed cheek, as he passes by a tenantless log cabin, so recently occupied by some friend or schoolmate.

For a week after our return we had but few drills, and a considerable number were allowed to spend the greater part of their time at the division hospital, with their wounded comrades. On the 15th our turn for picket came round again; but the weather was pleasant, and we now rather enjoyed these three-day tours away from our camp.

On the 17th a mail was brought out to us, and a member of Company B. loaned me a Goshen paper which contained several articles concerning our regiment; and a long eulogistic obituary notice of our lamented Captain Murray. Just after I had finished reading the articles and notice referred to, and was in the act of handing the paper back to the owner, a messenger from the front brought word to the reserve where I was posted, that a number of covered wagons were approaching the line, and I hurried out to see what it meant. It was our own division ambulance train, which I learned, from the officer in charge of it, had been over the river under a flag of truce for, and was now loaded with, severely wounded officers and men of the 3d corps, who had fallen

into the hands of the enemy during the battle, but had since been paroled.

As the ambulances passed through the line I looked into each one to see if I could discover any members of the 124th among the suffering, ghastly looking mortals they contained. As I lifted the curtain of the third wagon I was startled by the bandaged, distorted, but yet familiar face of Captain Murray. "Why, Captain," I shouted, "I was sure you were killed, and was told George Hawley had buried you on the field; and besides I have just been reading your obituary in a Goshen paper." I did not understand the Captain's first reply. He had been wounded by a bullet which had passed in between his lips, carried away his two upper and two lower front centre teeth, gone through the back of his neck, and lodged just under the skin of his shoulder. His lacerated tongue and mouth were so swollen he could scarcely speak; but smiling over the failure of his first attempt, he, with another painful effort, mumbled what I had now no difficulty in interpreting as "Worth a dozen dead men."

During the day I learned that eight or ten other severely wounded members of the 124th had been brought in through more distant portions of the line, and as soon as the regiment returned to camp I went over to the hospital to see them.

Captain Murray had, immediately on his arrival there, caused a telegram to be sent to his mourning friends at Goshen, notifying them that he still lived. And while other members of his family hastened to divest themselves of sombre weeds, his father the Hon. William Murray, President of the Goshen National Bank, and his uncle, the Hon. Spencer Murray, President of the National Bank of Orange County, both ex-members of Congress and intimate friends of Secretary of State Hon. William H. Seward, hastened to Washington, where a special engine was placed at their disposal which soon brought them to the Captain's side.

He was meantime gaining rapidly. Under the improved treatment and especial care he received after his arrival among his comrades, the inflammation in his face and neck was hourly abating; and though his tongue remained thick, he was soon able

to "wag it" in a most emphatic manner. On my second visit to the hospital, after his arrival, an officer and friend of his, who had accompanied me on both occasions, unfolded a paper and with a most sorrowful face, and in a doleful voice, began reading to him the obituary referred to; but before he had finished the first sentence the Captain shook his fist, mumbled "stop! stop!—you stop," and then explained in rather strong if but poorly articulated English that he had already listened to the reading of the same thing half a dozen times; and wound up his protest by borrowing a revolver from an officer who lay near him, and swearing by all that was good and bad, he would put a hole through the very next person who unfolded a newspaper in front of him. Before another day had passed the Captain was on his way home where gentler hands could minister to his wants.

While Captain Murray and other favored ones, who had richly earned every encomium and merited all the care that could be bestowed upon them, were rapidly recovering under the gentle nursing they were receiving at their comfortable homes, hundreds of others who had shown themselves just as brave and in every respect equally as deserving were, for want of the tender care their more fortunate comrades were receiving, daily growing weaker; and every morning there could be seen in front of the hospital tents at Aquia Creek a line of stretchers, most of which held the dead form of *somebody's* husband, father, son, brother or loved one, in most cases waiting a soldier's unceremonious coffinless burial, in what have long ere this become "unknown graves."

At dress parade on the afternoon of June 2nd the following letter from the Hon. Charles H. Winfield, who then represented our district in Congress, was read to the regiment:

GOSHEN, New York, May 28, 1863.

COLONEL A. VAN HORN ELLIS.

DEAR COLONEL: Pardon the liberty I take, of thanking and congratulating you, and through you your brave regiment, for the glorious manner in which the 124th bore itself through the recent battle. You do not doubt that we have hoped everything of

yourself and your men, since you left us, but we hardly dared to hope the regiment would stand the first severe and terrible battle shock with the cool and unfaltering courage displayed on the occasion referred to.

Could you fully realize, officers and men, the emotions of pride and satisfaction that filled all hearts here, and found utterance from almost every tongue, at the manner in which you faced danger and death in the discharge of your duty in the recent and first principal trial of your courage and patriotism, it would cheer and lighten your hearts in many a silent watch, or weary march, and nerve your arms in all the blows you are hereafter to strike for your flag and your country.

If the skill and courage displayed by your gallant regiment is any indication of the mettle of the Army of the Potomac, who dares to say that we shall not succeed in vindicating our country's honor and subdue the unholy rebellion which threatens it. I need not say that our delight and satisfaction at the glorious conduct of the regiment, has been mingled with deep sorrow at its severe losses. How the vacant places in your ranks must sadden your hearts at roll-call. Remember, however, that your missing heroes died nobly, and never men had better right to 'look proudly to Heaven from the death bed of fame,' wherever they rest. May the flowers of earth bloom beautifully above their ashes, and their pure spirits bask in the smiles of their God.

Say to all who love him, that Captain Murray, God bless his true heart and brave soul, is steadily and surely (humanly speaking) getting well, and much of his anxiety for a speedy recovery seems to be that he may be among his brave comrades as soon as possible, sharing their honors and dangers. His company, his regiment are the objects of his pride and his love, and his soul pants to be where they are. May Heaven spare and protect you all.

Your friend

C. H. WINFIELD.

Colonel Ellis, in his reply to the above, says, "Your kind and

inspiring letter is at hand, and being read to the regiment, was received with mingled emotions of pride and gratification. Pride, that our perils and devotion to the cause are appreciated by the respected and loved ones at home, and gratification at its expression through you, our honored representative.

"We have ever striven to do our duty, and were it possible for a craven thought to enter the bosom of the least among us, one glance at the flag which, weather-beaten and rent with balls, yet waves over what is left of us, would so fire his breast that death would be the least evil that could befall, for the remembrance of its fair donors, the dear 'Daughters of Orange,' is ever before us. The warring of a mighty tempest alone could equal the shouts of the 'American Guard' as they entered the conflict cheering loudly for the 'little girls at home.' The sod now covers many of these brave boys, but the sob of regret is fiercely choked by the grand thought that they fell with their faces to the foe, and not unavenged. . . . When asked for a list of officers and men who conducted themselves bravely in the fight, I could but say 'Here is the muster-roll of the regiment.'

"Your kind letter has cheered us much; for the loss of our general, the brave Whipple, and consequent failure of any report from the division, made us fear our efforts might never be appreciated by the ones we cared most for, but these fears are now removed."

Wednesday afternoon, June 3d, Major Cromwell inspected the regiment; and during the day it was rumored that something unusual was transpiring in General Lee's camp opposite Falmouth. Colonel Franklin's regiment, the 122nd Penn., completed its nine months service and started for home a day or two after our return from Chancellorsville; whereupon Colonel Ellis, being the senior officer remaining, took command of our brigade, which was now composed of the 86th and 124th New York, and numbered for duty between five and six hundred men.

On the 4th, about three o'clock a. m., Lieutenant Colonel Cummins came personally to my quarters, and notified me that he had just received orders to have his command ready to move at day-

break. At four o'clock the assembly was sounded, and we were soon in line, in heavy marching order. After remaining under arms about an hour, the regiment was dismissed with instructions to remain in readiness to fall in at a moment's notice, but the day passed quietly away without bringing us any farther orders.

On the 5th, about three o'clock in the afternoon, I was sitting on a cracker box in front of my log cabin, thinking of the events of the past, and wondering as to the future, when suddenly there came up from the direction of Fredericksburg, the booming of cannon. At first the reports, and the intervals between them, were such as led me to suppose a section, or at most three or four guns of some light battery, was at work; and as for a time there was no reply, I concluded a small force had been sent over the river on a reconnoissance, and were simply shelling the woods or, perhaps, attempting to drive in some one of the enemy's numerous outposts; when suddenly eight or ten reports in quick succession, from guns of a much heavier calibre than those to which I had just been listening, completely upset my calculations on that score. A moment later the intervals between reports were lost in a continuous roar; and hastening within my quarters, I took down and buckled on my sword, gave instructions concerning the filling of canteens and haversacks, slipped two or three boxes of sardines into my pocket—for I had not forgotten my experience with Jack Smith on our first crossing of the river—and soon had all my traps packed and in readiness for any emergency. Then I walked out to my company street for the purpose of directing my men to do the same; but my precaution, so far as they were concerned, was unnecessary; they had all buckled on their accoutrements, and quite a number with knapsacks strapped were walking thoughtfully, up and down by their gun stacks. Meantime, off to the left of the regiment, three or four "*dead-beats*" who had not yet been gotten rid of, might have been seen crawling or hobbling toward the surgeon's tent. For over an hour the distant thundering of artillery continued without a moment's cessation, then slackened and gradually died away; and at five o'clock all was quiet again.

On the morning of the 6th a man of the 86th New York, who had been on duty as a clerk at corps head-quarters, came into camp and reported that he had that morning copied an order from army head-quarters, which stated that three small brigades of picked regiments, one of which was to be selected from the Third corps, were to accompany a large body of cavalry on a secret expedition. About noon it was rumored that Colonel Ellis' brigade had been selected from the several recommended from our corps, for the especial duty above referred to. An hour later, an order was received by Colonel Cummins, which directed that all knapsacks, baggage, and such tents and blankets as were not absolutely needed for the immediate protection of the men, be left in camp, under guard of those who were deemed unfit for a long and rapid march. At five o'clock the long roll sounded, and a few moments later Colonel Ellis, accompanied by Captain Ben. Piatt and Lieutenant H. P. Ramsdell, members of his staff, and followed by half a dozen mounted orderlies appeared; and taking position at the head of the column, ordered his bugler to "sound the forward," and away we went.

On reaching the top of a knoll, a short distance from our now almost deserted little log village, I looked back from the head of our column, over the remnants of the two regiments, and remembering the many who went out with us, when we last marched from that spot to the battle-field, never to return, wondered if all the brave men now in our ranks would ever see their little huts again. We were scarcely out of sight of our camps, when the rain commenced falling, and we heard from the distance, the dull heavy rumbling of heaven's artillery, which ere long pealed forth right over us with a furious crashing—to me, more terribly grand than the thunder of any battle-field. Like the cannonading of the day before, it lasted about an hour, then gradually died away; but the rain continued half an hour longer.

We were thoroughly drenched, but as it was quite warm, we would have cared but little for that, if the rain had not left the road in such condition that at every step we slipped about to such an extent, and so much mud clung to our feet, that more

effort had to be put forth, and strength expended, in accomplishing one mile, than is usually required for four or five. Nevertheless we pushed on as fast as possible, and the men were in very good spirits until about eight o'clock, when Colonel Ellis, supposing he was on the wrong road, ordered a countermarch. I never heard that order given to a moving column—unless they had just run against the enemy's line of battle, or something of that sort—but that some one was called very hard names, and this was no exception to the general rule.

After retracing our steps about a mile, it was learned we had not left the correct road; and another countermarch was ordered, followed by another volley of—of—hard names. Then on, on we plodded, in the mud, through streams and over rough roads, until long after midnight. And when at last the order to halt was given, we were all so thoroughly tired out, that in fifteen minutes not twenty men in the two regiments, save the poor fellows who were detailed for picket, were awake. Two hours later there came the order "Have your men roused up, get your breakfasts, and be ready to resume the march at daybreak." As usual, however, we did not get off at the time appointed. We were up at half past four, but it was ten o'clock before we started.

When the sick call was sounded that morning, quite a number were found to be so completely exhausted, that they could scarcely move; and when at length the column got under way again they were left behind, with instructions to make their way back to camp the best they could. All were stiff and foot-sore, but it was a beautiful morning; and though on the start it was painful hobbling, rather than marching, we soon wore off our stiffness, and almost forgot our blistered feet. And encouraged by the better roads and beautiful sky, a spirit of cheerfulness soon pervaded the entire column; and muttering and grumbling gave way to jokes and mirth.

The place where we had bivouacked could not have been more than twelve miles, in a direct line, from camp; but we had marched at least sixteen in getting there; and if the distance of our slippings about in the mud, were added, it would make it at

least twenty miles. The place was called Cropp's Tavern, or Spottsville. There was a large frame building there, said to have been before the war a flourishing hotel; but its palmy days had passed.

In the room which had once contained the bar and where the majestic slave-breeders of the country round about had been wont, in times past, to meet and discuss o'er their wine the glory of coming days—when "the whole herd of cowardly northern abolition dogs" had been compelled, by their valor, to sue for mercy, and all the nations of the earth had come to recognize *them* as the most mighty, invincible lords and nobles of the sunny south, who, none daring to hinder, swayed the destinies of the proudest, grandest Nation beneath the sun—there was now, alas! nothing to be seen but an old rickety bedstead, on which lay a roll of rags, and old army blankets. These had apparently been spread on the floor, and served as bed and covering for several squalid half-naked children, who with a lean hungry-looking dog were running about the premises. There was only one other room in the house which appeared to be occupied, and that was furnished with three chairs, a long bench, a table, and two rolls of rags and blankets, among which sat an old man, who was a cripple, and two women—probably the mother and grandmother of the children referred to. There were on the premises, several log outbuildings, all empty, and a number of negro huts, but no negroes.

But to return to our march. As I have said, it was a delightful day; the air was cool, and the country was more fertile and thickly settled than any portion of Virginia through which we had yet passed. As soon as we left the tavern it was thought necessary to arrest all men and boys found along the route, to prevent their carrying word of our movement to the enemy. My company being at the head of the column, I witnessed that day many scenes which affected me more than anything I had ever seen in hospital or on the battle-field.

It was Sunday, and quite a number of able bodied men were at their homes. The first arrest took place about three miles

from the tavern. As we quietly emerged from a thick pine wood, I saw on a little hillock just in front of us, a pretty white cottage, more northern in style than was usually found in that portion of the south. On the slope in front of it was laid out, and in full bloom, a beautiful flower garden; near the house stood a group of beech trees, and around the whole ran a white picket fence. On the side nearest us, at a gate which stood half open, was a fine looking middle-aged man, dressed in a white linen suit, and a broad-brimmed Panama hat. At his side, with her hand resting on his arm, stood a noble looking woman, undoubtedly his wife. They seemed riveted to the spot, and stared at us, as if doubting their senses. And it is not to be wondered at that they were surprised, for the advance guard had gone off to a large house, some distance to the left, and the first notice they had of our approach was the appearance of a column of bristling bayonets emerging from the woods just in front of them. Before they had time to recover from the effects of their surprise, an orderly stood beside them, informing the man he was a prisoner. A moment later Colonel Ellis rode up, and after kindly expressing to the lady his regret that it was necessary to perform so unpleasant a duty, directed the orderly, without a moment's delay, to move forward with his prisoner. The lady bade her husband adieu without shedding a tear, or scarcely changing a muscle of her face, and moved rapidly up the garden walk to the house. But on entering the door she turned and looked back—saw him marched away under guard of despised Union-loving, slavery-hating soldiers; and shrieked, fainted, and fell backward into the hall.

After that we left at nearly every house a group of weeping women and children. It was in vain the Colonel sent back his aids, to tell them their loved ones would soon be permitted to return to their homes; nearly all believed we were pressing them into our army, and refused to be comforted.

Among that day's sad scenes was one which, though we felt extremely sorry because of the woman's grief, was so intensely ludicrous, it brought from all who saw it an irresistible peal of

laughter. The guards were marching a rough grey-bearded, gorilla-looking old sinner down a path leading from a dingy, dilapidated old house. And close in their wake came a "buxom young daughter of Erin" with a half naked, dirty, greasy baby, screeching like mad, under her left arm, while in her right hand she held a broom, brush upward, in a threatening attitude; and was crying so loud, she could have been heard half a mile at least, "Oh Lord! Oh Lord!—They have taken the *only husband I've got, the only husband I've got.*"

About one o'clock we halted thirty minutes for dinner, then pushed on for Bealton, a station on the Orange and Alexandria R R., which we reached about five o'clock P. M.; having marched thirty-four miles since leaving our camp at Falmouth, from which we had not been absent quite twenty-four hours. We remained at Bealton that night and the following day, during which time quite a number of ladies, hearing where we had halted, came to our camp with blankets and food for the men and boys we had brought along with us. One of these lady visitors was richly dressed, quite young, and decidedly pretty. She brought something for a young man whom she blushingly said was her brother.

Lieutenant C——, a fine looking, gay young officer, who had charge of the prisoners, seemed much affected by this southern beauty, and for half an hour after her arrival was very lavish of his attention to her; then he turned abruptly away, gave his entire attention to others, and from that time until she left camp hardly looked toward her again. Presently he was relieved from that particular duty, and came sauntering past where I sat leaning against a tree—from which position I had been amusing myself, by watching his deportment toward the prisoners and their callers—and I asked him the reason for his so suddenly leaving, in so unceremonious a manner, the charming young creature, whom I had judged from his actions he was at first very favorably impressed with. "Yes, yes," he replied, "she was pretty—but—well to tell you the truth I was quite seriously smitten by her pretty face; and she was real intelligent too—

but—" Never mind your buts, I said; let us hear your story. "Well I was just thinking that I ought to ask permission to escort her back to her home, for it seemed to me extremely dangerous and ungentlemanly to allow her to attempt a return unguarded; for our rough cavalrymen are, you know, scouting around through the woods in every direction, and she lived several miles away. But I happened to catch a glimpse of her feet, which by the way, were encased in very small boots, but *confound her*, she hadn't half laced them; and the long ends of the strings went dangling and draggling in the mud. Pshaw! it was like finding a nasty hair in one's pudding."

It is more than probable that this young lady's neglect to properly lace her shoes, saved the Union army a good young officer; for, about an hour later it was learned that a man of the 86th, who had given out on the march the day before, had been murdered that morning, within a mile of where we were lying. Then came the report, that a chaplain of one of the cavalry regiments was set upon only a short distance further away, and had barely escaped with his life—having been wounded in both shoulders. It was said he had quite a large amount of money with him, belonging to the men of his regiment, which had just been paid; that he was going back to express it to their families, and rather than lose it, he had risked, and came very near losing his life. That he had been able to effect his escape was attributed wholly to the fact of his being better mounted than were the guerillas who attacked him.

Just after dark Monday evening, we moved along the railroad toward the Rappahannock, and bivouacked for the night in a piece of wood about a mile from Beverley's Ford. At an early hour the next morning—Tuesday, June 9th—we pushed on again, but had gone only a short distance when we heard ahead of us the cracking of musketry. Quickening our steps we were soon at the Ford and commenced throwing a rough bridge across; but before we had worked ten minutes at the bridge, Colonel Ellis became impatient and spurring his horse into the water ordered us to wade over after him. The water reached only to our waists,

but the current was so strong that a number were drawn under and got their ammunition wet.

Once on the opposite shore such scenes appeared as are witnessed only in rear of contending battle-lines. As we moved forward, wounded men began to straggle back past us. Some of these were on horseback, others with pale faces and blood-stained garments came staggering along on foot, and occasionally one was borne hurriedly by on a stretcher, or in the arms of, apparently tender-hearted, but really cowardly, comrades. A little farther on we began to pass over, and saw lying on either side of us, lifeless bodies of men, dressed, some in grey and some in blue, which told unmistakably that the tide of battle was with the Union line. Up to that time, cavalry only had been engaged. Colonel Ellis' regiments were the first infantry on the field. But ere long batteries on both sides opened fire, and we heard through the woods beyond, shouts of officers, shrill bugle blasts, and the southern squeal and northern yell of charge and countercharge.

The contending lines were yet some distance ahead of us, but the din of battle grew louder and yet louder as we hurried on. Every few moments a horse with an empty saddle dashed past us on his way to the rear, or—almost halting in front of our column—swung his head aloft, snuffed the air, and with a wild snort wheeled and bounded madly back toward where he had lost his rider. Soon bullets began to hiss and whistle about us, and Colonel Ellis rode back and ordered me to throw out my own and Company F, and cover the right of the column. His order was promptly obeyed, while the brigade moved cautiously but steadily forward. Meantime the noise increased and spread, until the thundering of artillery and the crackling of musketry seemed to come from every side. We were now moving along a rough road through a slight ravine, in woods so dense that we could not see twenty yards away, look which way we would. Thicker and yet thicker flew the bullets, making weird music, as they sped through the trees over our heads. Every few moments we passed by a dead or dying cavalryman, sometimes

an enemy, and sometimes a friend. In several instances horse and rider lay dead together.

Presently a general officer, coming from the head of our column, unattended by either staff officers or orderlies, rode up to me and asked, "Where is Captain Winant?" On my replying "I presume, sir, that I am the person intended," he shouted "Halt where you are until further orders," and putting spurs to his horse, dashed away again. The brigade moved on, and as the rear of the column disappeared James Jones, a comical old Irishman, who had not yet become familiar with the peculiar sound of "them ere little hissin divils," tried to whistle Yankee Doodle; and though he failed in the attempt, his comrades assured him they were satisfied that there was one of their number who was not afraid, and wouldn't run if he didn't have an opportunity.

A quarter of an hour later a staff officer rode back to us, with orders from General Ames to join our regiment. He said he could not tell us where it was—had seen two regiments moving through the woods about a third of a mile beyond, but did not know where they had gone. Ploying my companies, I started off with them in the direction the brigade was moving when it left us; hoping to be able to trace it by footmarks and broken twigs; but we had moved only a few rods, when Colonel Ellis appeared, and led us off in an opposite direction. As we hurried on, the woods seemed to grow darker and yet darker, but ere long we saw light ahead, and then a large open field appeared; but before we reached it the Colonel ordered a halt, and directed me to deploy my men in the edge of the woods and keep them concealed, "and" continued he as he rode away, "if the devils charge you, make a determined stand—hold them at all hazards until reinforcements can be brought to you."

After forming line and causing my men to take distance until they were some four feet apart, I directed each one to select the tree in front of him, nearest the clearing, and get out to it, if possible, without discovering himself to the enemy; far across the field, in front of another piece of woods, not more than six

hundred yards away, there stood drawn up in battle line a brigade of Confederate cavalry. The men moved cautiously out one after another and when they were all in position—each behind a good sized tree—there yet remained, a few feet in advance of all the others, a huge pine. Now the 124th was a well drilled and thoroughly posted regiment, and every man in companies A and F knew that while their senior officer was by no means the largest bodied man among them, he was "heavy" on military usage, and they accordingly kept away from that extra large pine, behind which he was soon posted.

Presently, while looking down the front of the woods we were in, I saw walk out of them, about two hundred yards away, an officer I recognized as Lieutenant Houston of Company D, who, after advancing some twenty paces, halted in front of a dark object—which I believed to be a dead or wounded cavalry horse—and was in the act of stooping over it when, all of a sudden, he whirled about like a top, and I knew he had been hit by a rebel bullet. But he did not fall, and was able unassisted to make his way back to the woods where I concluded his company was lying.

The battle was now raging on both sides of us, but every thing in our immediate front was comparatively quiet, and I decided to walk down through the woods a few rods and see if I could not get sight of some Company D man who could tell me how seriously Houston was wounded. Just as I started a battery drove leisurely out of the opposite woods and took position on the right of the enemy's cavalry. About ten yards to the left of my line I came to a road, which ran from the plain into the woods. As I was in the act of crossing this road, two or three shells came crashing through the trees, and went plowing and bounding down it; and as I reached the farther side, another shell burst over my head, and one of the pieces cut off the top of a sapling, which as it fell slapped me in the face. Just then I remembered that my orders were to keep concealed, and that my proper place was behind that big tree in front of my companies. As for Lieutenant Houston, why Captain Benedict and the men

of Company D, would see that the very best care was taken of him, and perhaps after all his wound was but slight.

The enemy continued to shell that portion of the woods for about an hour, as rapidly as a four gun battery could do it; but fortunately their range was high, the trees were large, and we were not damaged by it. Once while this shelling was in progress, several small squads of their cavalry rode deliberately forward and came so close to our line that we could almost see the whites of their eyes, when a man in Company A, who could not resist so good a shot, tumbled one of them out of his saddle, at which the others turned and rode leisurely back, satisfied that the woods at that point were not entirely unoccupied. But they were apparently determined to know of a certainty how large a force confronted them; and finally dismounted and sent forward, in a heavy skirmish line, one of their regiments. It was not a pleasant sight, for they advanced directly against us. We had, it is true, the advantage in position, and the protection of the trees, while they were in the open field; but then there were only sixty of us, and no supporting force in sight, or hearing either, so far as we knew. On the other hand, their advancing line was not less than three hundred strong, while twice that number of mounted men remained close at hand ready to support them.

There is no denying the fact that a majority of our number would have welcomed some such order as General Whipple gave us that Sunday morning at Chancellorsville, "Check them a little and then make good your escape—if you can." But the Colonel's orders when he left us there some two hours before, were—it will be remembered—of quite a different tenor; yet we determined to attempt to obey them to the letter, and without delay prepared to give the enemy a warm reception. Directing my men to remain concealed, and not to fire a shot until the order was given, I took a position from which I could watch, as I supposed, every movement of the advancing line, until it should reach a little shrub, which grew in the open ground about one hundred yards in front of us. When it had arrived at that point I purposed opening fire. Steadily and rapidly forward they came—

they were almost there. My men without orders were bringing their pieces to an aim, and I was saying to them, "Wait a minute —just a minute," when suddenly the enemy's dismounted line seemed to sink into the earth, and every man of them disappeared from our view; at which Jimmy Jones, who stood just behind me with bloodless face, and bloodshot eyes almost starting from his head, mumbled to himself, "Holy mother, the divil's grabbed 'em," and then whispered "Captain give thra hoots for the bully old Divil." It was very plain to the rest of us that they had entered a ravine, of the existence of which we were not before aware. We expected every second to see them reappear, and quite a number in their anxiety stepped out from behind the trees and stood with their guns raised. Under such circumstances minutes frequently appear hours, and remembering this I watched and waited as patiently as I could; but the suspense soon became almost unbearable. They were doing something, but what? At this juncture their battery ceased firing and the thought came to me, "The ravine turns our position," and wheeling about, I discovered them moving stealthily through the woods, right against our flank; and before I had time to effect a change of front, or notify my men where they were, they, with their peculiar half yell and half squeal, and a volley right down our line, rushed at us. But their shout coming first, we had time to change position so as to retain the shelter of the trees before the volley was delivered. Under cover of the smoke it made, we changed front toward them, taking advantage as before of the protection afforded by the trunks of large trees. The enemy had while out of our sight formed in battle line, and as the smoke lifted I gave the order "*fire*," and my men poured into their solid ranks a volley which made them tremble, break and take to the trees for shelter.

Then was begun an almost hand to hand Indian fight; closer and yet closer they came, springing from tree to tree; determined to drive us to the open field, where they would have us at their mercy. My men stood firm and fired deliberately, and as rapidly as possible; but our foes continued to advance until the muzzles of guns from opposite trees almost touched each other, and I began to fear they would stretch their line and lap our flanks.

At this critical moment I heard through the woods the voice of Major Cromwell. He was shouting "Forward, men, forward," and a moment later a company of the 86th, with which he was hastening to our relief, struck the foe on their deep exposed left flank with a murderous volley. Then there was a rustling in the brush behind us and the tramp of horses coming rapidly toward us, and I heard Colonel Ellis shout "give them the steel, my honeys, give them the steel, the brigade will support you."

Then was heard the Yankee charging shout, given with a will, and as we rushed forward, the enemy in utter dismay broke from their cover and fled before us, followed by a galling fire which left the ground, in their line of retreat out of the woods and over the plain, strewn with dead and wounded. It may as well be here stated that the brigade with which Colonel Ellis supported us consisted of himself, Captain Ben. Piatt, Lieutenant H. P. Ramsdell, three orderlies, and a brigade flag.

The moment the enemy in their hasty retreat, emerged from the woods, their battery opened again, and the very first shell struck poor Frank Rhinefield, of Company A, killing him instantly —literally tearing him in two. He was an illiterate, untidy, careless boy, who would go to sleep on picket as quick as in camp, but once in line of battle, a braver or better soldier seldom handled a musket. We buried him where he fell.

This affair lasted about ten minutes, during which time we had two men killed and about twenty wounded from our three little companies, which numbered all told but eighty-five men. Among the enemy's dead left in our hands was a Major who had commanded the attacking party, and a young lieutenant. The latter could not have been more than twenty years of age—had a broad noble forehead, fine features and beautiful light curly hair. From his breast pocket, near which a ball had entered his heart, a small package of papers protruded. Drawing out one of these, thinking to learn his name, I began reading a letter, such as only a widowed, almost heart-broken mother, could have written to an idolized son. It seemed a sacrilege to turn to the second page, and I carefully replaced the letter, had the body carried to the side of road, and covered with a blanket, trust-

ing that after we had gone some friend might find and perhaps send it to that grief-stricken mother. During the afternoon companies A and F were moved about to a considerable extent but did not again become engaged.

The following extract from a letter written by Sergeant Peter P. Hazen, of Company C, and published in the Newburgh Journal just after this battle, gives a partial account of what took place among and in front of the remaining eight companies of the regiment, which under the immediate command of Lieutenant Colonel Cummins, were stretched along the line some distance to the left of where A and F became engaged.

"We halted just in the edge of the woods while the Rebel cavalry were in the edge of the woods opposite us. While lying here we were badly shelled from light batteries. . . A piece of shell about two inches square struck my woolen blanket just over my shoulder, but fortunately did not hurt me. Presently the Rebel cavalry charged down upon us across an open field in front. We fired a volley into them, at which they wheeled quickly, put spurs to their horses, and got out of range. We delivered our volley too soon. If we had retained it about one minute longer, and allowed them to come close to us, undoubtedly we would have done greater execution. We were now ordered up, and moved to the right, as skirmishers in the woods. The underbrush was quite thick, so that we could see but a short distance in front of us. We laid down behind trees and remained there in deep suspense, keeping a sharp watch for the approach of the enemy. There was constant firing at the right of us, and also considerable firing in the distance at the left. An occasional shell would burst among us, which would rouse us up for a while. At last we caught a glimpse of some four or five Rebel skirmishers stealing toward us through the brush. I raised up on my knees and fired at one of them. I am unable to say whether I struck him or not. They kept concealed behind trees, some three or four bullets passed near me, and two bullets hit a tree behind which one of our men was concealed. They had caught sight of him and fired at him. . . There was a man in Company E,

lying about two rods from me, behind a large oak tree. A shell came and struck about ten feet from him, plowed a furrow through the ground about six feet, then bounded and struck him in the side, tearing him in a dreadful manner. He gave two or three shrieks, and called for his comrades to carry him off, which was done; but, poor fellow, he soon died. Pieces of his clothing lay by the tree in a pool of blood, and the crackers from his haversack lay scattered about, almost as fine as powder. After the shell had done its work of destruction, it bounded some ten feet farther and entered a solid white oak tree, a foot in diameter, and cut it nearly off. There were two or three wounded Rebels lying only a few feet from us. They had been shot and their horses lay by them. . . Late in the afternoon, we received orders to fall back toward the Ford."

The man in Company E, above referred to, was private Miles Vance, who it is said besought the men who carried him to the rear to put a ball through his head and end his sufferings; and when they refused to do it, he begged of them to go and bring Lieutenant Charles B. Wood to him, "for," said he, "we were schoolmates, and when he sees me, torn in this way and dying by inches, I know he will grant my request. Lieutenant Wood was at the time commanding Company E, and had seen Vance hit, but before this strange request was conveyed to him the poor fellow had ceased to breathe.

About five o'clock we were ordered to fall back, and on returning to the Ford recrossed the river, moved about a mile beyond and bivouacked for the night in a pine grove. The following is a complete list of the members of the 124th,

KILLED AND WOUNDED AT BEVERLEY'S FORD.

COMPANY A.

Private	Frank Rhinefield	Killed.
"	John W. Swim	Wounded.
"	James Jones	"
"	Edward Rice	"
"	John Polhamus	"
"	Daniel Ackerman	"
"	Joseph Gardner	"
"	Samuel Clark	"

COMPANY F.

Private James N. Hazen.....Wounded.
" Sanford L. Gordon..... "
" Edward Sharp..... "

COMPANY D.

Lieutenant John W. Houston.....Wounded.
Private Wm. H. Callister ..... "
Corporal Henry H. Hyatt..... "
Private John Raymond..... "

COMPANY E.

Private Miles Vance.....Killed.

COMPANY G.

Private David Lowers.....Wounded.

The company of the 86th N. Y. which Major Cromwell led to the support of A and F, of the 124th, lost quite heavily. On the morning following the battle, the wounded of both regiments were sent by cars from Bealton station to Alexandria.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM THE RAPPAHANNOCK TO EMMETSBURG.

POLLARD, in his "Lost Cause" writes, concerning the condition of Lee's army just before it started out on what came to be known as the Gettysburg campaigns, as follows: "During the few weeks following the brilliant victory of Chancellorsville, never did affairs look so propitious for the Confederates. . . It was thought advisable to clear Virginia, of the Federal forces, and put the war back upon the frontier; to relieve the Confederate commissariat; to counterbalance the continual retreat of the armies of Tennessee and Mississippi by an advance into Northern territory, offer a counterpoise to the movements of the enemy in the West, and possibly relieve the pressure there on the Confederate armies. General Longstreet was recalled from North Carolina; and the army of Northern Virginia preparatory to the campaign, was re-organized, and divided into three equal and distinct corps. To General Longstreet was assigned the command of the First corps, consisting of the divisions of McLaw, Hood, and Picket; to General Ewell, who had succeeded to the command of Jackson's old corps, were assigned the divisions of Early, Rodes, and Johnson; and to General A. P. Hill was the Third corps given, consisting of the divisions of Anderson, Pender, and Heth. Each of these corps numbered about twenty-five thousand men. . . New and splendid batteries of artillery were added to the army; the troops as far as possible, were newly equipped, and ordnance trains were filled to their utmost capacity. The cavalry, fifteen thousand strong, were reviewed at Brandy Station; crowds of ladies attended the display, and General Stuart, the gallant commander, whose only weakness was military foppery and an inordinate desire of female

admiration, rode along the lines on a horse almost covered with bouquets. Nearly a week was consumed in reviewing cavalry, infantry, and artillery. By the 1st of June all was in readiness, and the advance was ordered." According to official Confederate reports, Lee's aggregate present on the 31st day of May was 88,754.

The strength of Hooker's army in the meantime had been, very materially reduced. Since the battle of Chancellorsville fifty odd regiments had been mustered out of the service because of the expiration of the terms for which they had enlisted. General Hooker, in a letter written to President Lincoln just as his army was leaving Falmouth, says, "My marching infantry force is cut down to *about eighty thousand men*." General Pleasonton, in his report dated May 27th, gives the effective force of the cavalry branch of Hooker's army at "four thousand six hundred and seventy-seven horse." For once it was acknowledged by the Confederates that the opposing armies were about equal in numbers.

On the 28th of May General Hooker telegraphed to Secretary Stanton as follows: "You may rest assured that important movements are being made. . . I am in doubt as to the direction he (Lee) will take, but probably the one of last year, however desperate it may appear." Hooker now determined to learn, if possible, just what Lee was doing. The following extract from an account of the crossing of the Rappahannock below Fredericksburgh on the 5th of June, which I find recorded in Moore's Rebellion Record, explains the thundering of artillery the day before we left Falmouth.

"Yesterday morning—June 5th,—the Engineer brigade was ordered to proceed to the river with a pontoon train sufficient for two bridges. Howe's splendid fighting division of the Sixth corps was selected for the work of crossing, and the point for laying the bridges was just below the mouth of Deep Run. . . Our infantry and artillery, as well as the engineers, began to debouch on the open plain opposite the crossing soon after noon, but, for some reason, active operations were not commenced

until about five o'clock. During the afternoon the pickets of the enemy lounged on the opposite bank. . . Save this picket of the enemy, no force was visible and the impression was strong that the enemy had left. About five o'clock the engineers drove their teams down to the river-bank and commenced unloading. The rebels at once betook themselves to the rifle-pits and commenced firing. Their rifle-pit here is a very strong one, and our men were within very close range. Quite a number of the Engineers were soon wounded, and it was evident that the old and successful method of pushing men across in boats would have to be adopted. General Howe at once ordered the 26th New Jersey, Colonel Morrison, to man the boats and push over and storm the rifle-pits. Six of the batteries of the Sixth corps were placed in position on the plain, and for nearly two hours shelled the rifle-pits. The rebels stuck to their position until the gallant Jerseymen set foot on the south side of the river. . . when they fled before the rapid charge of our men. Some sixty or seventy prisoners were soon brought in, being the main part of the force which had occupied the rifle-pit. By dark our skirmishers had advanced nearly to the timber beyond the Bowling Green road, without having met the enemy in force."

Early the following morning General Howe continued his advance, but was speedily brought to a stand by a portion of General A. P. Hill's corps, which yet remained in and about Fredericksburgh and gave the impression that the bulk of Lee's army was yet there.

A dispatch from General Hooker to General Hallock, dated June 6th, contains the following, which will explain the nature and object of the movement, in which the 124th had been called to play a part. "As the accumulation of the heavy rebel force of cavalry about Culpepper may mean mischief, I am determined to break it up in its incipiency. I shall send all my cavalry against them stiffened by about three thousand infantry."

The cavalry corps of the army of the Potomac was now commanded by General Pleasonton, and consisted of two divisions under Generals Gregg and Buford. The infantry selected to

accompany and "stiffen" the cavalry on the expedition referred to, consisted of ten small veteran regiments, the 124th being the youngest among them. Six weeks before we had been classed among the untried recruits; but since our bloody baptism at Chancellorsville the name of the 124th New York Volunteers had been transferred to the roll of "First class, tried and to be trusted, Veteran Battalions."

Five of these infantry regiments and a light battery were placed under command of General Russell, and accompanied General Gregg's division, which, on the morning of the 9th, crossed the river at Kelley's Ford, six miles below Beverley's. The 86th and 124th, with three other regiments and a battery, were commanded by General Ames, and operated with Buford's division, which crossed at Beverley's Ford before daylight on the morning of the 9th, and favored by a slight mist succeeded, without loss, in capturing the enemy's pickets there posted. General Pleasanton accompanied Buford, and as soon as the division reached the southern shore, ordered an advance in force. They had moved but a short distance when they came upon and engaged a brigade of cavalry, under command of the Confederate General Jones, which was speedily forced back some two miles, when a portion of the charging Federal line tumbled headlong into a blind ditch—the same, I presume, in which the dismounted Confederate cavalry so suddenly disappeared from in front of Companies A and F of the 124th, an hour or two later.

While the Federal cavalry were floundering in this ditch, Jones was reinforced by the brigades of Generals W. H. F. Lee and Wade Hampton, and Buford's advance was checked. In the meantime the five regiments of infantry under General Ames had crossed the river, taken possession of, and formed in battle lines at intervals, in the edge of a piece of woods about one and a quarter miles in extent. Before Buford's men could be got together after their tumble into the ditch, the brigades of Lee and Hampton were upon them; and being thrown upon the defensive, they were formed in the open fields on the flanks of the wooded center held by the infantry. After this disposition of

the Union forces at that point, considerable skirmishing and a number of charges and countercharges were made, without any material advantage to either side.

General Gregg's division, with the five regiments of infantry under General Russell, had crossed the river at Kelley's Ford, between the hours of six and nine A. M., without meeting any opposition except such as could be given by a rebel picket force, composed of one officer and twenty men. As soon as his entire force had reached the southern shore, Gregg formed it in four columns and took up a line of march toward Brandy Station, at which place he expected to form a junction with Buford's division. Gregg however soon became engaged with a Confederate force of cavalry under General Robertson, which, after considerable fighting, he succeeded in driving before him; and about one P. M. connected with the left of Buford's line. After this the battle dwindled to a mere skirmish fight. During the afternoon large columns of infantry were discovered moving to the support of the enemy's cavalry and at four P. M. General Pleasanton decided to withdraw to the northern shore of the Rappahannock.

The total loss during the day was about eight hundred on each side. Mr. Crounse, of the New York Times, in his admirable report of the battle, says, "The infantry force selected challenged particular admiration. The regiments were small, but they were reliable—such for instance as the. . . 86th and 124th New York."

The Richmond Sentinel's account says, "The fighting fluctuated throughout the day, lasting from five to five—twelve long hours. It was doubtless the severest and most extensive cavalry fight of the war. The scene lay chiefly on the farm owned by the late John S. Barbour, sen. The enemy made much use of their sharp-shooters, who, from the shelter of the adjacent timber, did us considerable damage."

The Richmond Examiner of June 12th comments as follows:

"The more the circumstances of the late affair at Brandy Station are considered, the less pleasant do they appear. . . The country pays dearly for the blunders which encourage the enemy

to overrun and devastate the land with a cavalry which is daily learning to despise the mounted troops of the Confederacy. It is high time this branch of the service should be reformed. The surprise on this occasion was the most complete that has occurred. The Confederate cavalry was carelessly strewn over the country . . . and they were surprised, caught at breakfast, made prisoners on foot with guns empty and horses grazing. Although the loss was insignificant, the events of the morning were among the least creditable that have occurred. Later some of the best officers sacrificed their lives to redeem the day. A very fierce fight ensued, in which, it is said, for the first time in this war, a considerable number of sabre wounds were given and received. In the end the enemy retired or was driven, it is not yet clearly known which, across the river. Nor is it certainly known whethre the fortunate result was achieved by the cavalry alone, or with the assistance of the Confederate infantry in the neighborhood. As the Southern troops remained masters of the field, and as they are believed to have taken at least as many prisoners toward the close of the day as they lost in the morning, they may be considered victors. But it is a victory over which few will exult." This is rather severe on the guerilla chief, Jones, as well as on the gallant Stuart, "whose only weakness was military foppery and an inordinate desire of female admiration."

There was captured during this engagement—which Northern historians term the battle of Beverley's Ford, but which the majority of Southern writers call the battle of Fleetwood—certain Confederate correspondence which at once revealed the presence of a large portion of Lee's army at Culpepper, and made known his design of invasion. This information was immediately forwarded to General Hooker at Falmouth, who forthwith set his army in motion, and at four P. M. on the 12th the advance brigade of our corps appeared, and encamped near Bealton Station, in the vicinity of which the 86th and 124th had been resting since recrossing the river on the evening of the 9th.

About six P. M. on the 12th the 124th was ordered back to the river, and placed on picket for the night near the station at Rap-

pahannock R. R. bridge. We saw small squads of the enemy's cavalry on the opposite shore, but no infantry. The night passed quietly. The next morning we were withdrawn from the picket line and moved back a few rods to a piece of woods where, after cooking our coffee and lying around for an hour or two, we were set to work throwing up a line of rifle-pits. As soon as these were completed we lay down behind them, and without further molestation from friends or foes spent the remainder of the day and following night.

Early Sunday morning, June 14th, we moved back to and bivouacked in the same piece of woods where we had spent the previous Sunday night. That afternoon we learned that the old Whipple division had ceased to exist. Its terrible losses at Chancellorsville, and the muster out of several regiments immediately after, had reduced it to a mere skeleton—five small regiments, numbering, all told for duty, on the 10th of June, the day it was ordered broken up, less than twelve hundred men. Berdan's sharp-shooters and the 86th and 124th New York were assigned to General J. H. Hobart Ward's brigade of Major General D. B. Birney's division.

Our new brigadier was a dark complexioned, stern-looking man, about fifty years of age, stood six feet three, weighed about two hundred and forty pounds, and when mounted on his iron grey charger looked a very giant. Instead of any personal remarks concerning his military experience, character, and standing in the army at the time, I will insert several extracts from published letters and official reports concerning him:

"General Ward served with me in the campaign between Vera Cruz and the capital of Mexico, with great zeal, activity, and distinction.

"WINFIELD SCOTT."

From the official accounts of the battle of Williamsburgh—"I report as having conspicuously distinguished himself, Colonel J. H. Hobart Ward, 38th New York Volunteers.

"P. KEARNEY, *Brigadier General*
Comdg. 1st Division 3rd Corps."

From his report of battle of Fair Oaks—"My warmest thanks are also tendered to Colonel Ward for the promptness with which his brigade was brought into action, and the gallant manner in which he fought it.

"JOSEPH HOOKER, *Brigadier General,*
Comdg. 2nd Division 3d Corps."

"September 4th, 1862.

"I have the honor to call the attention of the General commanding to the gallant conduct of Colonel J. H. Hobart Ward, 38th Regiment New York Volunteers, during the movements of this command on the Peninsula, and before Washington.

"D. B. BIRNEY, *Brigadier General.*"

"October 4th, 1862.

"There has been no Colonel in my command who has rendered more efficient and gallant services during the recent campaign on the Peninsula, both as a Colonel, and when temporarily in command of a brigade.

"P. HEINTZLEMAN, *Major General, Comdg. 3d Corps.*"

General Ward had received his brigadier's commission about the 4th of October, 1862, and been assigned to the command of Kearney's old brigade, with the remnant of which we had now been consolidated.

Our new division commander, D. B. Birney, though lacking in that fatherly kindness and solicitude for the welfare of those under him, which characterized the lamented Whipple, had served with great distinction in nearly every battle fought by the army of the Potomac, up to that time, and was regarded, with reference to his fighting qualities, as second to no division commander then in the field.

Our brave Ellis had returned to the immediate command of his regiment, and notwithstanding the fact that our old brigade and division had been broken up, it was very plain to all of us that we would be called upon to play no trivial part in the next great battle, for were we not to enter the field under fighting commanders, and stand or fall by the side of the army's oldest and as yet most famous battalions.

The Third Corps was now assembled about Bealton Station. At three o'clock Sunday afternoon the buglers at the various

headquarters sounded the attention, and we were soon on the march again—not pushing forward toward Richmond but hurrying back toward Washington. At eleven P. M. we had made about twelve miles, and bivouacked for the night at Catlett's Station.

At six o'clock on the morning of the 15th we were off again—moved through or past Brentsville, Bristow Station, and Manassas Junction, and when darkness set in, lay down to rest on Manassas Plains. This was a very severe march. The distance traveled was but sixteen miles and the roads were good, but the heat of the sun was terrible. A large number were obliged to fall out, and about fifty of the corps were sun-struck. At noon we halted for a short rest at Bristow Station, where we found encamped the 15th Vermont. They had just drawn a ration of soft bread, and were boiling their coffee. As our almost exhausted men who had been obliged to leave the ranks, but were trying to keep up with the column, came staggering in, these Green Mountain boys distributed to them their entire ration of soft bread and the hot coffee they had just prepared for their own dinner. And when our ambulances with the victims of sun-stroke came up, they voluntarily turned their camp into a temporary hospital, and themselves into nurses—vacated their tents as far as they were needed, brought water, and did everything else in their power to alleviate the sufferings and preserve the lives of the unfortunates. When after a half hour's halt our men were ordered to fall in, and the column started on again, some one proposed three cheers for the big-hearted sons of Vermont, and they were given with a will.

On the 16th we were up with the sun, and after breakfast moved on about three miles and stacked arms behind an old rifle pit, on the battle-ground of first Bull Run. Colonel Ellis, Lieutenants Wood and Grier, and a considerable number of our enlisted men, who had participated in that engagement, said the country round about looked very familiar, and called to mind many of the ludicrous scenes of that appropriately-named engagement, which was in reality but a series of military blunders that ter-

minated in a general stampede. We spent twenty-four hours at that point, during which time all hands bathed in the famous but insignificant stream from which two battles had derived a name. There had not been a pound of soap issued to our regiment since its departure from Falmouth, and this opportunity to bathe was most welcome. During the afternoon nearly all those who had fallen out on the march the day before came up, and all awoke on the following morning refreshed and ready for the work that was before them.

On the 17th, after a slow and easy march of about five miles, we bivouacked near Centreville. The next afternoon the sky clouded, and anticipating a storm, the men one after another, without orders, put up their tents, and dug small trenches around them to keep the water out. Just before dark, a heavy shower came up, and the rain continued to fall at intervals until ten o'clock the following morning.

At two P. M. on the 19th we struck tents and an hour later were under way again. As evening approached, a drizzling rain storm set in, and the last five hours of our march—which did not end until after midnight—was made in almost total darkness, through heavy mud, and slush from three to ten inches deep. We had passed by Gum Springs, and were pushing forward on a road which led toward Leesburgh. Several white horses were moving in rear of the regiment which preceded us, and I tried to keep the head of our column from ten to fifteen paces away, but every now and then we would get past Colonel Ellis and run into them, or receive notice of our too near approach, by being slashed in the face with their muddy tails. Occasionally one of our number would tumble into a hole filled with water which came up to his knees, and then another would trip or stumble over something, and fall head foremost in the mud

At last the orders "Halt your regiment, file in the field to your right, and bivouac until morning," came from an unseen officer who, I judged, from the sound of his voice, sat on his horse by the side of the road, not ten feet away from me. But the field was worse than the road, the men sank half way to their

knees, and the horses floundered so that their riders were either thrown or obliged to dismount. 'And as they plunged about in the black darkness, several of our men were injured by being trodden upon. Colonel Ellis tumbled with his horse into a ditch, but fortunately escaped with no greater injury than an extra coating of Virginia mud.

Presently, by hallooing to one another, the regiment was formed in a supposed line, and Ellis shouted at the top of his voice, partly, I have no doubt, for the benefit of his new brigade and division commanders—whose headquarters he supposed to be within hearing distance—the rather unique military order, "*Squat, my bullfrogs.*" We were in a swampy meadow, the rain continued and the damp night air chilled us. Very few of our number had blankets, but we made the best of our unavoidably uncomfortable situation, and squatting or lying down with our shelter tents about or under us, nearly all managed to get a little sleep.

It is needless to state that we awoke the following morning wet, stiff and sore; and as to dirt—well, I wish some of the fair daughters of Old Orange could have beheld their "gay and dashing soldier boys" just then—*perhaps* they would have rushed to the mud covered arms of the "brave fellows" for a loving embrace, gently removed the particles of clay which clung to the jaunty goatee or mustache, and with their taper fingers have dusted the dirt from the glossy, curly hair, who knows?

At day-break we moved a quarter of a mile to higher ground, *borrowed* all the loose fence rails in the vicinity which had not already been *loaned* to other regiments, and soon had fires burning and coffee boiling. Just after breakfast the sun came out, and the men were soon hard at work cleaning their guns and traps and whipping the dirt from their clothing.

Just before starting out on this campaign, I had bought of our sutler a seamless felt overcoat, which I carried in place of a blanket. I had purposely selected an extra large one, which came almost to my feet, and could easily have been buttoned around a person of double my size. But early that morning I

awoke dreaming that some one was tying my arms behind me, and as I sprang to my feet every button flew off of it, and behold! the skirt did not extend three inches below my waist!

On the morning of the 21st the attention was sounded from General Ward's headquarters, and our brigade was moved about half a mile where, after being dressed in a continuous line, the various regiments were caused to form column at full distance, and ordered to pitch tents. No objection was made to this movement.

During the afternoon we heard heavy firing in the direction of Winchester, and in the evening it was reported that Pleasanton and Stuart had rencountered near Middleburgh, and that after a short and spirited engagement, Stuart's forces had been routed with a loss of two pieces of artillery, sixty prisoners, and at least a hundred killed and wounded.

On the afternoon of the 22nd, companies A, F, I, K, G, and B, were detailed for picket, marched off some five miles, and remained out three days. During this picket tour considerable foraging was done. Fresh beef, veal and poultry abounded. Lieutenant J. O. Denniston, of Company G, who was decidedly the most accomplished forager and best liver in the regiment, managed somehow to get hold of a fat goose. Now Denniston was a good cook, as well as forager, and when at length he had succeeded in getting his goose roasted to his entire satisfaction, several of his brother officers who had been looking on from a distance, concluded to make him a social call—expecting, of course, to get an invitation to stay to dinner. We chatted and laughed, joked and told stories; the time slipped by, dinner hour passed, the goose got cold and so did Denniston, but not a word was said about dinner.

Lieutenant Denniston is now a Presbyterian minister, and I don't want to be understood as implying that either he or his men stole that goose. He, like the rest of us, usually foraged with money. And just here I will record, that in my judgment, there was not in the entire army a regiment which committed as few depredations, or interfered as little with the enemy's prop-

erty, as the 124th New York Volunteers. At this particular time, however, Lee's entire army was on a grand foraging raid. For several days his vanguards had been operating in loyal Pennsylvania, pillaging the stores and granaries of the towns and country along the border; while his main army was reaching out in all directions from the heart of Maryland for the winter stores and stock and goods of the liberty-loving people of that really loyal State. Beside all this, our picket line stretched across the broad acres of a notorious traitor who was even then on duty in General Lee's army. With these facts in view, the most conscientious will not, I am sure, think the less of any one concerned because of any suspicious circumstances connected with what I am about to relate.

When, having failed to receive an invitation to partake of Lieutenant Denniston's fat goose, I returned to my tent, there was hanging from the roof pole in front of it, a fine quarter of fresh veal; while my cook had ready to fry a large tender looking beefsteak, neither of which I had furnished money to pay for. After partaking of a hearty meal I asked him where it came from, and he replied unhesitatingly that, though he did not really know, he guessed the chaplain or surgeon Montfort, or some of "them fellers" over at headquarters, had been out and bought it of an old farmer—who lived just through a piece of woods a short distance to the left of our grand reserve—and having more than they could well carry back, concluded to leave me some. "For, do you know," he added, "meat is awful cheap out here."

Just after breakfast on the 25th, we received orders to pack and get ready for a march. At half past six our videttes were withdrawn and at seven we started back toward camp; but just before we reached it, our way was blocked by a moving column of troops belonging to our corps, and we lay down on the grass in a meadow by the side of the road, and waited until Colonel Ellis came along with the balance of the regiment. Once in the column we pushed on all day at a rapid gait, with but slight halts—crossed the Potomac on pontoons at Edwards' Ferry, near Ball's Bluff, and bivouacked for the night in a piece of woods

near Poolsville. This was one of the severest marches, as to length and rapidity, we had ever made. Those of our number who had been on picket, could not have traveled less than thirty miles. But we had all been living well for a number of days, started that morning in the best of spirits, and stood the march first-rate—hardly a man falling out.

Just before this march was ordered, a civilian by the name of Milner Brown, who had been appointed by Governor Seymour to a vacant Lieutenancy in Company I, arrived at Colonel Ellis' headquarters. The regiment was at the time short of line officers, and when his company joined the column that morning, Lieutenant Brown was assigned to the command of it. Those readers who have been in the service know what kind of a reception is usually given a civilian who is sent to command veteran soldiers.

After the regiment had halted that evening, this new officer, who had not once left his place at the head of his company, nor uttered a word of complaint, nor asked a favor of any one—though all in the regiment knew that he was suffering terribly—was seen sitting alone on a log, and by the flickering light of a candle piercing the yet solid flesh of his tender feet, to tap the live blisters with, which they were almost covered; and then to slip on his shoes and walk off without showing the sign of a limp, his standing in the regiment was instantly raised. The bitter feeling against him, which had all day rankled in the breasts of the brave men of Company I, gave way before an incoming feeling of admiration and respect. In the morning he was hated as an interloper, and had he that day fallen dead by the roadside, I doubt if there was an enlisted man in the regiment who would have volunteered to bury him. At night he was respected by the whole command, and there were men in his company who were ready to risk their lives in defence of their "plucky" new Lieutenant. But alas! before he had time to become fairly acquainted with his brother officers, or to learn half the good qualities of the men under him, he, and not a few of them, lay dead together on the bloody field of Gettysburgh.

The following morning, June 26th, we marched about twelve miles, and bivouacked near Point of Rocks. On the 27th, moved eleven miles and rested for the night near Middletown. On the 28th we passed through Frederick, a city of considerable size and beauty, since made famous by Whittier's "Barbara Fritchie." We trod the same street which Jackson's men some nine or ten months before had traveled, and must have passed by that old house where,

> "Up rose old Barbara Fritchie then
> Bowed with four score years and ten.
>
> "Bravest of all in Frederick town
> She took up the flag the men hauled down.
>
> "In her attic window, the staff she set
> To show that one heart was loyal yet."

But old Barbara Fritchie's was not the only loyal heart in Frederick when we passed through. In no southern town or city, during our three years wanderings up and down through Virginia and Maryland, did we find half so many outspoken loyal women as we that day met with at Frederick. It was very warm and at nearly every second garden gate, or doorway, there stood loyal, smiling mothers not unfrequently accompanied by comely daughters, all eagerly passing to our thirsty soldiers pure cold water, and it is beyond belief how thirsty our young men were, and the quantity they drank.

The first group we met, after entering the city, was composed of a Quaker-dressed, grey-haired matron, and two very fine-appearing young ladies, who were apparently her grand-daughters. A colored man was "toting" water from a well near by, and the young ladies, each with two cut glass goblets, were dealing it out from wonderfully bright-looking pails. As Company A was moving past them, one of my men, who was notoriously bashful but really thirsty, ran up with his face down but eyes raised, and thrusting his arm between two men who stood there drinking, was in the act of dipping a cup of water from one of the pails; when the old lady with a horrified scream, sprang forward and caught hold of his arm, saying as she did so, "Lizzie! Liz-

zie! Don't let that man spoil your pail of nice clean water with that horrid, nasty black cup." This was too much for our bashful but brave soldier, who rushed back to the ranks, looking for all the world as if he had been caught in the act of stealing something, and made no further effort to quench his thirst until we came to a stream beyond the limits of the city.

We lay down to sleep that night in a beautiful green field about four miles beyond Frederick. When we awoke next morning, June 29th, it was raining quite hard and not a few of our number found themselves lying in puddles of water several inches deep. At half past five A. M. our column was in motion again, and before the order "Halt for the night," was given, we had marched twenty-five miles, and were north of Taneytown.

About two o'clock on the 30th, we got under way again, countermarched, moved back through Taneytown and taking the Greencastle road, pushed on to Emmetsburg, near which place we bivouacked for the night. I find recorded in my diary under that date, the following:

"The men of our regiment are in tolerably good spirits but have lost considerable flesh during the last week, and complain bitterly whenever we start on a march, of the pain in their swollen, blistered feet. The country through which we have for several days been moving, is fertile and well cultivated. The villages contain many fine cottages, and the people generally appear to be strongly Union in sentiment."

CHAPTER X.

GETTYSBURG.

EMMETSBURG, Tuesday Evening, June 30th.—The campaign thus far has been unusually severe. Our regiment left Falmouth on the 6th instant with nearly if not quite three hundred rifles; and since that date upwards of fifty convalescents and detached men have rejoined us. But our losses at Beverley's Ford, added to the number who have in the meantime fallen from sun-stroke, been stricken down by disease, or so completely worn out physically by our terribly severe marches that we have been obliged to send them off to hospitals, reaches the appalling sum total of ninety-eight men. When we assembled for our monthly muster this morning there were but two hundred and sixty-four rifles in the line.

Just after muster, orders which announced a change of commanders and stated that Hooker had given place to General Meade, of the Fifth corps, were read at the head of each regiment. Now every intelligent soldier believed that we were on the eve of a great, if not a decisive battle, and at first quite a number shook their heads as if saying to themselves, "There is something wrong *somewhere*." But the majority remembering that Hooker had been found wanting at Chancellorsville, expressed their feelings in regard to the change of commanders at that critical period, in such terms as the following, "I'm satisfied. It's all right boys. That's 'Old Pennsylvania Reserves,'—they say he's a *brick*." These remarks came in whispered tones from the ranks behind me, just after the orders referred to had been read. Half an hour later a man in Company F, who had just finished boiling a cup of coffee, raised it toward his lips, and striking a sort of stage attitude, shouted "Soldiers of the army

of the Potomac; take out your little *Mammy Random* books; I am neither a prophet, nor yet the son of a prophet, nevertheless, I am about to prophesy, so draw pencils, ready! aim! The traitor army of Northern Virginia, in the trackless forests of Virginia, surrounded on all sides by traitorous Virginians, and commanded by the arch traitors Lee and Jackson of Virginia, *is one thing*. But Lee and his army, without Jackson, on open northern soil, surrounded by loyal men, women and children of the north, *is another thing*. The next battle is on the free soil of old Pennsylvania, and Lee is whipped, no matter who commands us—do you hear me? shoulder pencils. Parade is dismissed."

This bombastic semi-comical speech, in reality expressed the profound convictions of not only the man who uttered it, but of nineteen out of every twenty in the army of the Potomac; and when a Pennsylvanian standing near replied—"You are right, my boy," and proposed "three cheers for the sentiment," they were given with a will by all who heard him.

The first day of July broke clear and bright, and the sun as it moved toward the zenith, had an angry look and sent down upon us blistering rays. We were lying within two miles of the State line. The day before the First and Eleventh corps had moved over into Pennsylvania, and about two o'clock that afternoon, as we lay upon the ground, one after another asserted that they could hear the rumbling of distant artillery. A few moments later sharp bugle blasts from every direction called us into line. Our brigade then moved through Emmetsburg, and filed off into a green field just beyond the village, where we remained until several other brigades had moved past, when we fell in again, and started off after them at quick time, on a forced march for Gettysburg.

As we hurried along, the booming of cannon, at first scarcely heard, gradually became more distinct. Quickening our pace we pushed on through clouds of thick dust which continually rolled back, enveloped, and almost choked us, while the terrible rays of the sun seemed momentarily to grow more intense.

Soon strong men began to stagger from the ranks and fall fainting by the wayside, but our pace was not slackened. Louder and fiercer boomed the yet distant guns, and forward men, forward, shouted the officers. Every piece of woods we passed through was left almost filled with gasping prostrate men; and all along the road, with no one to care for them, lay the dying, and in not a few instances the dead, who had fallen from the column ahead of us. But forward! forward! was the cry, and on, on we pushed. Blankets, tents, clothing and even food, guns and cartridge-boxes lay strewn along the line of march. Two-thirds of the time our field and staff officers were dismounted and their horses loaded down with the guns of men who had become too weak to carry them; and when at length we reached the high ground just south of Gettysburg, and the order to halt for the night was received, not over a hundred men and but five or six officers appeared in our regimental line. But the conflict for that day was over. During the greater part of the afternoon the First and Eleventh corps, composed of about twenty-two thousand men, had, it was said, been engaged with a body of the enemy which had gradually increased in numbers during the bloody contest, from five to fifty thousand.

It was now generally understood, by both officers and private soldiers that the two grand armies were concentrating in that vicinity; and it was believed by many that a general battle, upon the issue of which hung the destiny of America, would be fought there on the morrow.

All who had arrived upon the field slept that night with their loaded weapons lying beside them, and at roll-call the next morning, the majority of those who had given out and fallen behind during our forced march from Emmetsburg, answered to their names; and when at eight A. M. General Ward led his brigade forward to the position which had been assigned it, the 124th was about two hundred and forty strong.

Sickles' corps did not number that morning, over nine thousand men present for duty. It was composed of two divisions of three brigades each. Birney's division formed the extreme

left of the main line, which was drawn up nearly in form of a horseshoe or capital U, on a ridge about three miles in extent. Ward's brigade was on the left of the division and occupied the southern slope of a rocky eminence just beyond a small stream called Plum Run, and about an eighth of a mile northwest of Round Top. The 124th held position in the right centre of the brigade. There were, when the battle began, no troops to the left of our regiment except the 99th Pennsylvania.* The 86th New York was posted in a piece of woods, to the right of the 124th, but between that regiment and ours there was an unoccupied space of about a hundred yards. Smith's Battery was posted behind our brigade; its right section stood on high ground several yards in rear of the 124th.

We had not yet learned by bitter experience the inestimable value of breastworks, and instead of spending our leisure time in rolling together the loose stones and throwing over them such a quantity of earth as would have formed a bullet proof line, we lounged about on the grass and rocks, quietly awaiting the coming shock, which many declared themselves ready and anxious to receive. But there were undoubtedly those among us who ardently wished and perhaps secretly prayed that when the battle opened, it might rage the most furiously along some other portion of the line.

Two-thirds of the day was consumed by the opposing generals, in endeavoring to discover the weak points in each other's lines, and in getting ready for the dread encounter. During all this time an ominous silence prevailed, broken only by the occasional exchange of rifle shots by skirmishers or sharpshooters who, on crawling out in front of their respective lines would unwittingly approach uncomfortably near each other, or the angry mutterings of a gun as a solitary shell went screeching through the air.

Early in the morning it was reported that Lee's entire army had arrived upon the field, but as they remained inactive hour

* A few moments after the battle opened the 40th New York moved up and took position on the left of the 99th Pennsylvania.

after hour, it was positively asserted by the knowing ones that the Confederate chief, not having Stonewall with him, couldn't get a clear conception of the topography of that particular section, and preferred to have his adversary assume the offensive. But the Federal commander had no desire that the battle should begin until Sedgwick arrived with the Sixth corps, which at ten o'clock on the previous evening, was at Manchester, thirty-two miles away.

At mid-day a cloud of dust was discovered in the dim distance, and at two P. M. Sedgwick's advance brigade arrived upon the scene; whereupon General Meade mounted, and after ordering the Fifth corps which had held position on the right to move over to the left, he rode hurriedly along the line from right to left to see for himself if all the troops were in the positions he had assigned them. He also desired to personally superintend the posting of his old corps on the left of the Third, for it was his intention to prolong his line in that direction. But I will explain by quoting from his official report of the battle, why General Meade did not complete his programme.

"About three P. M. I rode out to the extreme left to await the arrival of the Fifth corps and post it. . . Having found Major General Sickles, I was explaining to him that he was too far in advance, and discussing with him the propriety of withdrawing, when the enemy opened upon him with several batteries in his front and his flank, and immediately brought forward columns of infantry and made a vigorous assault. The Third corps sustained the shock most heroically."

General Lee, it appears, "at length selected that portion of the Union line held by Birney's division, as the most practicable point of attack," and ordered Longstreet to open the battle by hurling against it his powerful corps of between twenty and thirty thousand men. At about three P. M. a dozen Confederate batteries opened upon us in a most furious manner, and Smith's guns in our rear, and a number of Federal batteries in the vicinity, forthwith began to reply. Presently long solid lines of infantry appeared advancing directly against us.

ysburg, on afternoon of July 2d, 1863.

Corp. W. H. Campbell.
Corp. Thomas Hart.
Joseph Brownley.
William Carpenter.
Charles W. Gallow.
John H. Dingee.
Richard Rollings.
John H. Warford.
Joseph L. Simpson.
Charles H. Valentine.
James McGrath.
Corp. Robert C. Hunt.
Corp. Jacob Lent.

Corp. James Coney.
Corp. N. Hershler.
Judson P. Adams.
Levi Cartwright.
Henry R. Broadhead.
Samuel S. Crawford.
William C. Van Sickle.
Ansey W. Quick.
Isaac G. Gillson.
Charles Roberty.
Corp. J. H. Taylor.
Corp. T. R. Allington.
Corp. O. U. Knapp.

Corp. Ezra Hyatt.
Norman A. Sly.
John C. Degraw.
John W. Leeper.
William E. Hyatt.
Rans. S. Lamoreux.
Carl G. Hoolman.
Thomas M. Hyatt.
Thomas S. Storms.
Thomas P. Powell.
Corp. H. H. Hyatt.
Corp. G. H. Pelton.

Corp. A. P. Millspaugh.
Leighton Millspaugh.

Samuel Yeomans.
Wesley Morgan.
George Scring.
Robert Ashman.
I. L. Conklin.
S. L. Conklin.
J. H. Conklin.
Samuel Potter.
Allen Owen.
Jabez Odell.
Jacob Wilson.
Michael Hager.
Enos Jenkins.

Abram T. Drake.
Ansey W. Quick.
William Balmos.
Floyd S. Goble.
John C. Magee.
Ira Gordon.
Richard L. White.
John M. Young.
Eli Coddington.
George Garrett.
Frederic Randle.
George H. Langton.

Jeremiah Dolson.
Gilliam Berthoff.
Benjamin Gray.
Joseph Wood.
Edward Royce.
John Edwards.
George B. Kinney.
Wells Benjamin.
John Gamin.
James Pembleton.
David Currey.

John N. Knapp.
Nelson Ford.

Sergt. Jon. Birdsall, of "A,"
Right Gen. Guide.
1st. Sergt. John C. Wood.
A
Sergt. Samuel T. Rollings.
Capt. C. H. WEYGANT.

1st. Sergt. J. D. Drake.
F
Sergt. A. P. Francisco.
2nd Lt. S. W. Hotchkiss.
Sergt. E. M. B. Peck.
1st Lt. THOMAS J. QUICK.

Lt. H. P. Ramsdell,
Acting Adjutant.

1st Sergt. Chas. Stewart.
D
1st Sergt. Eb. Holbert.
Capt. J. W. BENEDICT.

WN.

lenant Colonel F. M. CUMMINS.

Drum Corps.

J. G. Buckley, "H."
Arthur Haigh, "H."
G. W. Dimmick, "D."
Henry C. Payne, "B."
Robert L. Travis, "F."
A. A. Millspaugh, "K."
G. W. Campbell, "K."
R. L. Stephens, "F."
Wm. Hamilton, "B."
Henry Hoofman, "C."
C. Van Gordon, "G."

Daniel [illegible] "G."

ysburg, on afternoon of July 2d, 1863.

Lt. H. P. Ramsdell,
Acting Adjutant.

Lieutenant Colonel F. M. CUMMINS.

A — Capt. C. H. WEYGANT.

Corp. W. H. Campbell.	Samuel Yeomans.
Corp. Thomas Hart.	Wesley Morgan.
Joseph Brownley.	George Sering.
William Carpenter.	Robert Ashman.
Charles W. Gallow.	I. L. Conklin.
John H. Dingee.	S. L. Conklin.
Richard Rollings.	J. H. Conklin.
John H. Warford.	Samuel Potter.
Joseph L. Simpson.	Allen Owen.
Charles H. Vallentine.	Jabez Odell.
James McGrath.	Jacob Wilson.
Corp. Robert C. Hunt.	Michael Hager.
Corp. Jacob Lent.	Enos Jenkins.

Sergt. Jon. Birdsall, of "A," *Right Gen. Guide.*

1st. Sergt. John C. Wood.

Sergt. Samuel T. Rollings.

F — 1st Lt. THOMAS J. QUICK.

Corp. James Comey.	Abram T. Drake.
Corp. N. Hershier.	Amsey W. Quick.
Judson P. Adams.	William Balmos.
Levi Cartwright.	Floyd S. Goble.
Henry R. Broadhead.	John C. Magee.
Samuel S. Crawford.	Ira Gordon.
William C. Van Sickle.	Richard L. White.
Amsey W. Quick.	John M. Young.
Isaac G. Gillson.	Eli Coddington.
Charles Roberty.	George Garrett.
Corp. J. H. Taylor.	Frederic Rundle.
Corp. T. R. Allington.	George H. Langton.
Corp. O. U. Knapp.	

1st Sergt. J. D. Drake.

Sergt. A. P. Francisco.

2nd Lt. S. W. Hotchkiss.

Sergt. E. M. B. Peck.

D — Capt. J. W. BENEDICT.

Corp. Ezra Hyatt.	Jeremiah Dolson.
Norman A. Sly.	Gilliam Bertholf.
John C. Degraw.	Benjamin Gray.
John W. Leeper.	Joseph Wood.
William E. Hyatt.	Edward Royce.
Rans. S. Lamoreux.	John Edwards.
Carl G. Hoofman.	George B. Kinney.
Thomas M. Hyatt.	Wells Benjamin.
Thomas S. Storms.	John Gannin.
Thomas P. Powell.	James Pembleton.
Corp. H. H. Hyatt.	David Currey.
Corp. G. H. Pelton.	

1st Sergt. Eb. Holbert.

WN.

Corp. A. P. Millspaugh.	John N. Knapp.
Jedutham Millspaugh.	Nelson Foot

1st Sergt. Chas. Stewart.

Drum Corps.

J. G. Buckley, "H."
Arthur Haigh, "H."
G. W. Dimmick, "D."
Henry C. Payne, "B."
Robert L. Travis, "F."
A. A. Millspaugh, "K."
G. W. Canfield, "K."
R. L. Stephens, "E."
Wm. Hamilton, "B."
Henry Hoofman, "C."
C. Van Gordon, "G."

Daniel Place, "C."

Battle Line of the 12th N. Y. V., at the Opening of the Second Day's Contest at Gettysburg, on afternoon of July 2d, 1863.

Colonel A. VAN HORNE ELLIS.

Lieutenant Colonel F. M. CUMMINS.

Major JAMES CROMWELL.

Corp. W. H. Campbell. Corp. Thomas Hart. Joseph Brownley. William Carpenter. Charles W. Gallow. John H. Burgess. Richard Rollings. John H. Warford. Joseph L. Simpson. Charles H. Valentine. James McGrath. Corp. Robert C. Hunt. Corp. Jacob Lent.	Samuel Yeomans. Wesley Morgan. George Sering. Robert Ashman. I. L. Conklin. S. L. Conklin. J. H. Conklin. Samuel Potter. Allen Owen. Jabez Odell. Jacob Wilson. Michael Hager. Enos Jenkins.	Sergt. Jon. Birdsall, of "A," *Right Gen. Guide.* 1st. Sergt. John C. Wood. Sergt. Samuel T. Rollings.	A	Lt. H. P. Ramsdell, *Acting Adjutant.* Capt. C. H. Weygant.
Corp. James Comey. Corp. N. Hershler. Judson P. Adams. Levi Cartwright. Henry R. Broadhead. Samuel S. Crawford. William C. Van Sickle. Amsey W. Quick. Isaac G. Gilson. Charles Roberts. Corp. J. H. Taylor. Corp. T. R. Allington. Corp. O. U. Knapp.	Abram T. Drake. Amsey W. Quick. William Balmos. Floyd S. Goble. John C. Magee. Ira Gordon. Richard L. White. John M. Young. Eli Coddington. George Garrett. Frederic Rundle. George H. Langton.	1st. Sergt. J. D. Drake. Sergt. A. P. Francisco. 2nd Lt. S. W. Hotchkiss, Sergt. E. M. B. Peck.	F	1st Lt. Thomas J. Quick.
Corp. Ezra Hyatt. Norman A. Sly. John C. Degraw. John W. Leeper. William E. Hyatt. Lans. S. Lamoreaux. Carl G. Hootman. Thomas M. Hyatt. Thomas S. Simms. Thomas P. Powell. Corp. H. H. Hyatt. Corp. G. H. Felton.	Jeremiah Dolson. Gilliam Berthoff. Benjamin Gray. Joseph Wood. Edward Boyce. John Edwards. George B. Kinney. Wells Benjamin. John Gannon. James Pemberton. David Carney.	1st Sergt. Eb. Holbert.	D	Capt. J. W. Benedict.
Corp. A. P. Millspaugh. Jedidiah Millspaugh. James T. Thitchener. Cornelius S. Allen. Lucrecius D. Baird. Nathaniel Jackson. Charles Edwards. John T. Larue. Henry R. Turner. James S. Barrett. Corp. S. Chalmers.	John N. Knapp. Nelson Foot. William Whan. Thomas Farley. James Flanagan. John Gordon. William Moore. Patrick Ryan. James A. Smith. Smith Birdsley. Charles Lozier.	1st Sergt. Chas. Stewart. Sergt. A. T. Vanderlyn. Sergt. Amos M. Enger.	I	2d Lt. Milner Brown.
Corp. William Mead. Duncan W. Boyd. Frederick Lamereaux. Thomas Rodman. Wm. W. Ackerman. William R. Owen. Corp. George W. Briggs.	Albert E. Bunce. Morvaiden Odell. John Tompkins. Nathan Edwards. Benjamin F. Flagg. James Ryan. James E. Daniels.	1st Sergt. W. H. Many. Sergt. G. L. Brewster. Sergt. Peter P. Hazen. Sergt. Thomas Taft.	C	Capt. Wm. Silliman.
Corp. Isaac Decker, "K." Col. Beaver S. McQuaid, "I." Corp. M. Reasler, "F."	Corp. G. W. Edwards, "A." Corp. Charles Zneiga, "G." Corp. J. P. Moulton, "C."	2nd Lt. J. A. Grier.		Maj. J. H. Thompson, *Surgeon.* Capt. T. S. Bradner, *Chaplain.* Lt. R. V. K. Montfort, *Asst. Surgeon.*
Corp. Noah Kimbark. Judson B. Lupton. William McVay. E. D. Van Keuren. S. S. Youngblood. William H. Brown. Charles W. Tindall. Thomas O'Connell. James E. Homan. Francis S. Brown. Thornton Dawson. Wm. S. M. Hatch. Grandison Judson. Corp. A. Armstrong. Corp. A. R. Rapalje.	John Rediker. Gouverneer M. Legg. James Crist. Milton Crist. Josiah Dawson. Geo ge Butlers. Edward Hunter. Chester Judson. William Dawson. Jesse F. Camp. Jeremiah Crist. Wm. Whiteside. John E. Kidd. Daniel W. Baker. Jacob F. Jordan.	1st. Sergt. W. H. Cox. Sergt. C. B. Gallation. Sergt. Thomas W. Bradley.	H	Capt. David Crist.
Corp. John H. Little. Corp. Wm. H. Howell. Corp. George Brown. Curtis Ackerman. James B. Moore. Abraham Rogers. Jacob M. Coddington. James M. Coddington. Corp. Theo. Dolson. Corp. Benjamin Hull. Corp. Adam W. Miller. Corp. Moses Crist.	James Shaw. Hezekiah Harris. Horace Wheeler. Solomon Carr. John Scott. William H. Shaw. Simeon Wiseal. Charles Downing. George Nichols. A. W. Loucreaux. Arch. Freeman. Henry M. Howell.	Sergt. Jas. A. Beakes.	E	1st Lt. Chas. B. Wood.
Corp. John W. Pitts. Corp. J. R. Conning. Ambrose S. Holbert. Jacob Cameron. John C. Hawley. Wm. W. Carpenter. Nathan M. Hallock. Henry W. Smith. Talmage Burhans. Corp. J. C. Vermylla.	John Carroll. H. R. Mayette. Henry C. Baker. Patrick Cameron. Michael Cullen. Samuel V. Tidd. Joseph Point. George H. Stephens. David S. Purdy. James H. Conklin.	1st. Sergt. L. S. Wisner. Sergt. W. T. Ogden. 1st. Lt. James Finnegan. Sergt. W. W. Ritch. Sergt. J. J. Crawford. Sergt. W. W. Parsons.	K	Capt. W. A. Jackson.
Corp. Abraham Denney. Corp. Alexander Jones. Harvey A. Brock. Albert W. Parker. Daniel Regenbaugh. William Campbell. Garret H. Bennett. Geo. R. Fitzgerald. William Jackson. Charles Benjamin. Cornelius Hughes. William D. Dankline. Wm. H. Benjamin. Corp. J. M. Miller. Corp. Wm. Tyrese. Corp. J. V. Cole.	Selah Brock. Mark Sager. Daniel Giles. Gilbert Peet. Wm. H. Trainer. John Trainer. George E. Griffin. John M. Calyer. Thomas Corbett. James Roke. F. McMahon. Daniel Smith. Walter Barton. A. H. Merritt. Joseph Jones. Daniel Rider.	1st Sergt. Isaac Decker. 1st. Lt. J. O. Dennistón.	G	Capt. Isaac Nicoll.
Corp. James Scott. William Shawson. William Lamereaux. Benjamin M. Little. Reuben Rynders. Ed. M. Carpenter. Robert J. Holland. Edward T. Mapes. Nathan C. Hanford. James M. Merritt. William H. Merritt. Corp. Harrison Bull.	Joseph Bross. John Glanz. James Gavin. Jesse Hunter. Patrick Leach. George Hawley. James Odell. Joseph Pratt Harrison Storms. A. W. Tucker. Samuel Garrison. Charles H. Bull.	Sergt. J. H. Hanford, Sergt. C. A. Wheeler. Corp. H. G. Horrick, of "D." *Left Gen. Guide.*	B	1st Lt. W. E. Mapes. William B. Van Houten, *Sergeant Major.*

M. Ross, *Bugler.*

Drum Corps.
J. G. Buckley, "H."
Arthur Haigh, "H."
G. W. Dimmick, "D."
Henry C. Payne, "B."
Robert L. Travis, "F."
A. A. Millspaugh, "K."
G. W. Candell, "K."
R. L. Stephens, "E."
Wm. Hamilton, "B."
Henry Hoofman, "C."
C. Van Gordon, "G."

Ambulance Corps.
Sergt. H. Hammond, "F."
Chas. W. Davis, "D."
Jas. H. Clark, "D."
Thos. McBride, "I."
Sam. A. White, "I."
Geo. G. King, "C."
A. S. Van Zile, "G."
H. D. Parret, "K."
E. Stephens, "A."
Jeremiah Sieco, "F."

Isaac Ellison, *Hospital Steward.*
David Stephens, "D," *Surgeon's Assistant.*
John McGinn, "F."
John Brown, "I."

Captain Silliman, who yet commanded our color company, stood where he could observe this advance much better than I could, and I will insert here an account he gives of it in a published article concerning the death of Major Cromwell. "At length the enemy appeared in heavy columns of battalion advancing on us from the opposite slope. As we held the position by a single line of battle unsupported, the enemy's superiority in numbers, as seen at a glance, seemed overwhelming. As they approached they deployed in four distinct lines of battle, and came resolutely on under a rapid fire from our batteries. All seemed lost but in the steady lines of the Third corps not a man flinched, and among them all, none were more ready for the fierce encounter than Major Cromwell," and let me add Captain Silliman, for—notwithstanding his faults as a commander of intelligent men—a braver officer than he showed himself to be on the battle-fields of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, has seldom drawn a sword.

When the enemy's advance line drew near the base of the hill we were on, it appeared to almost halt for a minute, and then started rapidly forward again, and with fierce yells began ascending the slope; and there was heard an opening crash of riflery all along our front, which was the death knell of hundreds; yet on, on they came, but very slowly, only a few feet at a time. Now Cromwell hurries to Colonel Ellis, who stands behind the color company and asks him to order a charge; but the Colonel shakes his head and tells the Major to go back to his place again. Now the enemy has been brought to a stand, but he is only a few rods away. Again Cromwell walks toward Ellis. This time he is accompanied by Adjutant Ramsdell. Once more he requests the Colonel to charge, and is again told to go back to the left of the regiment; yet a moment later their horses are brought up and, against the remonstrances of Captain Silliman and several others, they mount. The Major's only reply is, "The men must see us to-day," and he rides slowly to and wheels his horse about in rear of the centre of the left wing;

where with drawn sword and eyes fixed on the Colonel he impatiently awaits his superior's pleasure.

Presently Ellis by a simple nod gives the desired permission; at which Cromwell waves his sword twice above his head, makes a lunge forward, shouts the charge, and putting spurs to his horse, dashes forward through the lines. The men cease firing for a minute and with ready bayonets rush after him. Ellis sits still in his saddle and looks on as if in proud admiration of both his loved Major and gallant sons of Orange, until the regiment is fairly under way, and then rushes with them into the thickest of the fray.

The conflict at this point defies description. Roaring cannon, crashing riflery, screeching shots, bursting shells, hissing bullets, cheers, shouts, shrieks and groans were the notes of the song of death which greeted the grim reaper, as with mighty sweeps he leveled down the richest field of scarlet human grain ever garnered on this continent.

The enemy's line, unable to withstand our fierce onset, broke and fled, and Cromwell—his noble face flushed with victory, and his extended right arm waving his flashing sabre—uttered a shout of triumph. But it had barely escaped his lips when the second line of the foe poured into us a terrible fire which seemed in an instant to bring down a full quarter of our number.

Once more we hear our loved Cromwell's shout, and once again we see, amid the fire and smoke, his noble form and flashing blade; but the next instant his brave heart is pierced by a rebel bullet, his right arm drops powerless, his lifeless body falls backward from his saddle, and loud above the din of battle we hear Ellis shout, "My God! My God, men! Your Major's down; save him! save him." Again the onset of Orange County's sons becomes irresistible, and the second line of the foe wavers and falls back; but another and solid line takes its place, whose fresh fire falls with frightful effect on our now skeleton ranks. So terrible is it that two-thirds of the artillerymen in our rear are either killed or wounded, and the balance driven

from their guns, by the shells and bullets which pass over and through our line.

Lieutenant Colonel Cummins, with the experience and eye of an old soldier, realizes that a skirmish line without reserves, be the men who compose it never so brave, must eventually be swept away by a continually renewed solid battle line, and unwilling the regiment should be disgraced by the loss of guns it is expected to protect, attempts to get them started to the rear, and while in the act is so badly injured by a shell—which striking a gun-carriage hurls it against him—that he is carried from the field. But our brave Ellis yet remains, now seen in bold relief, now lost amid the clouds of powder smoke. A moment longer the central figure, he directs his regiment. Again the rebel line begins to waver and we see his proud form rise in his stirrups; his long sharp sword is extended upward, a half uttered order escapes his lips, when suddenly his trusty blade falls point downward, his chin drops on his breast, and his body with a weave pitches forward, head foremost among the rocks; at which his wounded beast rears and with a mad plunge dashes away, staggering blindly through the ranks of the foe, who is now giving ground again, firing wildly as he goes. But we are too weak to follow him, yet with desperate effort the Orange Blossoms struggle forward and gather up such as they may of the wounded, and with them and the bodies of Ellis and Cromwell, we fall slowly and mournfully back to the main line, from which we never should have advanced—and there reform our shattered bleeding ranks, and prepare to receive as best we may the next onset of the foe. Three times we have beaten him back, but now we are exhausted. For forty minutes the brigades of Ward and De Trobriand, at first scarce three thousand strong and now reduced to but little more than half that number, have held their ground against Longstreet's entire corps. But what of his next assaults? Where is the gallant Sykes with his "glorious old Fifth corps?" One of our convalescents, David Dewitt, who arrived upon the field from hospital, without arms, just before Ellis fell, and has been busying himself carrying off the wounded,

says, "A brigade with Maltese crosses, the regulars, I think, lie just over the hill there, boiling coffee." My God! I hear some one reply, as the rebel battle line in front increases fire and shows signs of again advancing against us.

General Sickles has been seriously wounded. Birney now commands our corps, Ward our division, Berdan our brigade, and I find myself, who twenty minutes before was fourth officer in rank, in command of what is left of our regiment. The battle has now become general, and is raging nearly all along the line. Three hundred cannon are rending the air and shaking the earth. From every knoll and hill-top, in front and rear, there come flashes of fire, and puffing clouds of smoke.

Our immediate foes keep up a brisk fire but do not again attempt to ascend the hill in front of us. My ten little companies, now numbering but a trifle over a hundred, all told, are gathered together in little squads like picket posts along the front they are yet expected to hold; but their deliberate aim is not without its effect on the solid Confederate battle line at the foot of the hill below them.

Passing down the line, I notice that there is no commissioned officer in command of Company I, and ask, "Where is your plucky new Lieutenant?" and the answer comes, "You will find him lying down yonder with four or five of I, beside him." "What!" I answer, "Is he dead?" and am told that he fell fighting nobly at the head of his company. Reaching Company K, I learn that Lieutenant Finnegan has been borne to the rear wounded in two places. Coming to G, which moved into line that morning with more men than any other company in the regiment, I see a corporal's guard in charge of a corporal, and learn that Captain Nicolls' dead body lies wedged in between two rocks at the farthest point of our advance. "Two of the boys tried to get him out," says one of the survivors, "but they both fell killed or wounded beside him. Lieutenant J. O. Denniston, also of that company, had early in the action received two wounds and been carried from the field never to return to duty with the regiment.

The slope in front was strewn with our dead, and not a few of our severely wounded lay beyond the reach of their unscathed comrades, bleeding, helpless, and some of them dying. One of this number who lay farthest away, among the rocks near the body of our truly noble and most esteemed Captain Nicoll, could be seen ever and anon, beneath the continually rising smoke of battle to raise his arm, and feebly wave a blood covered hand. It was James Scott, of Company B, one of the ten thousand chief heroes of that great battle. "When Cromwell dashed through the ranks to lead the charge," says one of his comrades, "Scotty was the first to spring forward after him, and when the Major fell it seemed to me Scotty changed to a wild beast. He had been wounded in the arm and his hand and face were covered with blood, but he did not seem to know anything about it, and kept on fighting until a ball hit him in the breast, and went clear through and came out of his back. That must have paralyzed him like, for his hands dropped and, as his gun struck the ground, he fell heavily forward upon it, as if he had been killed instantly." But no, Corporal James Scott yet lived. At the time he received the wound in his breast, the foe were falling back, and before he recovered consciousness, a piece of shell had struck his left arm, near the shoulder, (the first wound he received was in the wrist of the same arm) another bullet had passed through his body—entering the left side, breaking two ribs and coming out of the right groin. And yet another piece of shell had struck him in the back, inflicting a most ugly wound and paralyzing every part of his body, except that right hand and arm which, as consciousness slowly returned, he was waving in token of victory.

The lifeless remains of Ellis and Cromwell were now lying on a huge boulder but a few yards in our rear, and in plain sight of all those remaining in our battle line, who chanced to look that way. But the gallant boys fought on. If there were any cowards in our ranks when the battle began they were not there then. Every few moments a man would drop a rifle which had become clogged or so hot that he could not hold it steadily, and bidding those beside him be careful where they fired, rush forward

and pick up, in place of it, one that had fallen from the hands of a dead or wounded comrade.

Presently the foes in our front slackened their fire, and turning for a moment to view the bodies of our late leaders, I saw the brains protruding from a small round hole in Ellis' forehead, and discovered glistening on Cromwell's blood-stained breast a gold locket, which I knew contained the portrait of one who but a few moments before was his beloved young wife, but then alas! though she suspected it not—his widow. Calling Lieutenant Ramsdell to me, I directed him to detail bugler Ross, and such other unarmed men as he could find, take charge of the bodies, have them carried to the rear, and if by any means he could get them north and deliver them to their friends, to do so. And when he replied "I will do my *best*, Captain," I felt sure he would succeed. How he performed the difficult task will appear in due time.

As I wheeled about toward the regiment, I heard some one ahead of me say, "they are advancing," and glancing to the left saw that the 40th New York was retiring before a heavy battle line, and that a column of the foe had already moved past their flank. The 99th Pennsylvania too was giving ground. The next instant an aid rode up, (Captain Cooney, I think it was) with orders to fall back without a moment's delay. Repeating it to the regiment and directing Captain Silliman to see it properly executed, I hastened to the woods at our right for the purpose of withdrawing several men of Company A, whom I had, before the action began, personally posted at intervals behind the trees and rocks along the otherwise unoccupied space between our regiment and the 86th. As soon as I could get these men together, I started with them after the regiment which was now some distance away, but the enemy had in the mean time advanced to the top of the ledge our regiment had occupied, and it was by mere chance that we escaped capture.

That division of the Fifth corps which had been sent to reinforce us, but had stopped on the way to boil their coffee, was now advancing, but it would have to fight hard and desperately

if it regained the ground which with its assistance we might have held. When I reached the regiment, General Ward had halted and was haranguing it—he was saying that he expected almost impossible things of his old troops, but that such a heroic, noble resistance as we had made, was beyond any thing he had ever dared to hope for, even from them. Such praise, at such a time, was sweet indeed, but alas! it did not bring back to us our trusted leaders, or resuscitate our most valiant comrades, who lay dead upon the bloody hillside and along the rocky ledge we had just left.

The active part that the 124th was to play in this great three days' battle, had now been performed. Moving to a piece of woods about a mile in the rear of the Union battle line, we prepared, and with saddened hearts and gloomy thoughts, quietly partook of our evening meal.

That Sickles erred in advancing beyond the position assigned him, no student of the art of war denies. That his entire corps fought most nobly; and that Ward's brigade was left unsupported and held its own for over an hour in a most deadly contest with a force of the enemy which outnumbered it four to one —until its line of battle was reduced to a mere skeleton and then with the exception of one regiment was not driven, but withdrawn because there was no force at hand to prevent the enemy's moving past its flank, must be acknowledged by all honest writers who are acquainted with the facts.

General Lee, in his official report of the battle, referring to the second day's contest, says: "In front of General Longstreet the enemy held a position, from which if he could be driven it was thought that our army could be used to advantage in assailing the more elevated ground beyond. . . After a severe struggle Longstreet succeeded in getting possession of and holding the desired ground."

General Meade in his official report of Gettysburg, writes: "Notwithstanding the stubborn resistance of the Third corps, under Major-General Birney, (Major-General Sickles having been wounded early in the action) superiority in numbers of corps of the enemy enabling him to outflank its advanced position, Gen-

eral Birney was counseled to fall back and reform behind the line originally desired to be held."

The Third corps hospital, to which nearly all our wounded were taken, had been established in a grove about half a mile to the left and rear of where we were then lying. Just after dark, I decided to walk over to it, and try and find the poor fellows and learn how they were being cared for. When about half way there I fell in with a party of stretcher-bearers with loaded stretchers. They were moving in single file along what appeared to be a beaten path, and said they belonged to the Third corps. There were but two men to each stretcher; and they all seemed nearly worn out and were trudging along very slowly with their heavy loads toward the hospital. As I hurried by one after another I stooped and peered into the faces of the wounded, to see if there were any of the 124th among them, but it was too dark for me to determine positively in that way, and so I asked each one to what regiment he belonged. The first was a member of the Third Michigan; the second, was a sergeant of the 63d New York; the third was a Pennsylvanian; the fourth made no answer to my inquiry, though his eyes were wide open and I was sure he was looking at me. Instinctively I placed my hand on his forehead, expecting to find it hot and dry, but instead it was cold and clammy—he was dead.

The scene at the hospital was one of the most horrid imaginable. During the afternoon and evening nearly three thousand wounded men had been brought there, and others were continually arriving. The ground of the entire grove, which was several acres in extent, seemed to be literally covered with them; and such noises filled the air as I had never heard before and trust may never reach my ears again. The wounded of our brigade had been among the first to arrive, and were lying, I had no doubt, near the centre of the grove. The thick foliage caused dark shadows to fall upon those acres of mangled bleeding human forms. Away down through the trees flickering lights could be seen, the reflections of which fell with ghastly effect upon the corps of surgeons who with coats off, and sleeves rolled up, were

gathered at, or moving rapidly to and fro about the amputating tables. After a moment's hesitation at the edge of the woods I resolved to attempt to pick my way through toward where I hoped to find the objects of my search, but as I moved on among those, for the most part, prostrate men, their groans, and piteous appeals for help, appalled me. Many of them were already dead. Several in a state of delirium were shouting as if upon the battle-field, and others, believing I was a surgeon, besought me to stop just a moment and bind up the wounds, from which their life-blood was ebbing. Presently a man I was about stepping over, sprang to his feet, shook in front of me a bloody bandage he had just torn from a dreadful gaping wound in his breast, and uttered a hideous laughing shriek which sent the hot blood spirting from his wound into my very face; at which he threw up his arms as if a bullet had just entered his heart, and fell heavily backward across a poor mangled fellow whose piercing wails of anguish were heart-rending beyond description. I could endure no more, and wheeling about, hurried over the wounded and dying to the open field again; and returned to the regiment, glad that I had informed no one of my intended errand of mercy, for I was heartily ashamed of the weakness which had caused me to turn back.

Several times during the night we were awakened by the thunder of artillery and crash of small arms, and at four o'clock, on the morning of the 3d, the battle opened again with considerable fury and raged without cessation until about nine A. M. Then an ominous silence prevailed for several hours, during which batteries and columns of troops were hurried hither and thither over the field, and toward the front, plainly indicating that the lines were being strengthened in anticipation of another determined onset of the now most desperate foe.

About two o'clock the enemy opened a most furious cannonade with a hundred and twenty guns. The Union batteries soon began to reply, and for over two hours the earth seemed to tremble beneath us, and the air was filled with fire and smoke and iron. The enemy's infantry kept concealed, and our

troops with loaded weapons hugged the ground, impatiently awaiting the opening of the less noisy but more deadly contest with small arms which they all knew was sure to follow. At four o'clock it came, grand, desperate, terrible. But the 124th were not called to participate in it, and I will not therefore attempt to describe it. At five o'clock it was over. Picket's division, the flower of the Confederate army, had been annihilated, and Lee and his cohorts defeated—fairly and squarely whipped in open fight—not overpowered by a force superior in numbers, for the slight difference that existed in that particular was in favor of the Confederates.

For once the army of Northern Virginia had met its old adversary even handed and received a crushing defeat. For once the army of the Potomac had gained a great and undisputed victory. The latest accounts, carefully drawn from the most reliable authorities on both sides, give 72,000 Unionists, and 76,000 Confederates, as the full number of *armed men* actually on the field. Of this number over forty thousand were either killed or wounded.

During the quiet hours which preceded this decisive and final struggle, my thoughts very naturally reverted to wounded comrades at the hospital; and about noon I decided to mount Colonel Cummins' "Old Bay," * ride hurriedly over to the hospital and make another attempt to see them. As I dismounted and tied my horse to a shrub at the edge of the grove, I noticed a short distance beyond me a company of about fifty men digging graves, and was informed by one of them that they had been busy since morning burying men who had died of their wounds, during the night and morning.

On penetrating the woods I passed by several who were even then in the agonies of death, and saw two groups of men moving out with dead bodies; but the chaos of the previous evening had disappeared and comparative order reigned. Nearly all had re-

* Early that morning Colonel Cummins had turned over to me his horse for my personal use until he should be able to return to the regiment, on condition that I should not make a fool of myself by riding him or any other horse in any action during his absence.

ceived attention, but the majority of the surgeons had not yet quit their posts to seek the rest their pale, haggard faces told they were much in need of. I did not see our surgeon, Dr. Thompson,* but was informed by one of our wounded men who lay near the amputating tables—and who said that for eighteen hours he had listened to the horrid noise made by saws gnawing away human bones—that he and Chaplain Bradner had worked faithfully all night, doing what they could for the Orange Blossoms.

At four o'clock P. M. the regiment was ordered forward, and we spent the remainder of the day and following night, posted as a reserve about ten rods in rear of the main line. Hundreds of the wounded yet remained on a bloody strip of disputed ground between the picket lines, and all night we could hear the distant piteous cry of "water! water! water!"

Early on the morning of the 4th, it was discovered that the enemy's videttes had disappeared from our front, but Union skirmishers who were forthwith advanced, soon came upon their pickets, posted behind a line of rifle pits.

About noon I walked out a short distance beyond the Union battle line over that harvest field of death. All the wounded who had fallen behind where our picket line then was, had been carried to the rear. But scores of blackened, distorted human faces lay in front of me, turn which way I would. The bodies of many of these had been torn most frightfully by pieces of shell. Interspersed among them lay the bloated carcasses of dead horses. The ground in all directions was strewn with the broken engines and paraphernalia of war, and here and there upon the grass could be seen dark crimson spots which told of pools of blood.

As night came on a rain storm set in, and early on the morning of the 5th, I was ordered to send out a squad of men in charge of a commissioned officer to assist in burying the dead. About noon we moved a short distance to a piece of wood, where we pitched what tents we had and remained until the afternoon of the 6th.

* Dr. Montfort spent the night on the field, near the front, ministering to such of the wounded as had not yet been carried to the hospitals.

LIST OF KILLED AND WOUNDED, OF THE 124TH, AT THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG.

COLONEL A. VAN HORNE ELLIS ..... *Killed.*
LIEUT.-COLONEL F. M. CUMMINS ..... *Wounded.*
MAJOR JAMES CROMWELL ..... *Killed.*

COMPANY A.

CORP. Jacob Lent ..... *Killed.*
Charles H. Valentine ..... *Wounded.*
Isaac L. Conklin ..... "
Michael Hager ..... "
Wesley Morgan ..... "

COMPANY B.

William Lamereaux ..... *Killed.*
Harrison Storms ..... "
R. J. Holland ..... "
CORP. James Scott ..... *Wounded.*
E. M. Carpenter ..... "
John Glanz ..... "
Wesley Storms ..... "
J. J. Messenger ..... "

COMPANY C.

Benjamin F. Flagg ..... *Killed.*
SERGT. Thomas Taft ..... *Wounded.*
SERGT. Peter P. Hazen ..... "
Frederick Lamereaux ..... "
Nathan Edwards ..... "
James Ryan ..... "

COMPANY D.

James Pembleton ..... *Killed.*
John W. Leeper ..... "
CORP. Gideon H. Pelton ..... *Wounded.*
CORP. Ezra Hyatt ..... "
John C. Degraw ..... "
George B. Kinney ..... "
David Currey ..... "
Thomas S. Storms ..... "
Thomas M. Hyatt ..... "
John Gannin ..... "

COMPANY E.

James B. Moore ..... *Killed.*
Hezekiah Harris ..... "
John Scott ..... "
Matthew W. Wood ..... *Wounded.*

COMPANY F.

1ST SERGT. John D. Drake ..... *Killed.*
CORP. O. U. Knapp ..... "
A. W. Quick ..... "
I. G. Gillson ..... "
CORP. James Comey ..... *Wounded.*
CORP. James H. Taylor ..... "
George Garrett ..... "
William C. Van Sickle ..... "
G. H. Langton ..... "
Levi Cartright ..... "
Floyd S. Goble ..... "
Ira Gordon ..... "
F. Rundle ..... "

COMPANY G.

CAPTAIN ISAAC NICOLL ..... *Killed.*
Wm. D. Dawkins ..... "
William Campbell ..... "
Thomas Corbett ..... "
Walter Barton ..... "
James Roke ..... "
1ST LT. JAMES O. DENNISTON ..... *Wounded.*
SERGT. Isaac Decker ..... "
Charles Benjamin ..... "
Garrett H. Bennett ..... "
Cornelius Hughs ..... "
Gilbert Peet ..... "
Selah Brock ..... "

COMPANY H.

William H. Cox ..... *Killed.*
James E. Homan ..... "
SERGT. Thomas Bradley ..... *Wounded.*
CORP. N. B. Kimbark ..... "
Wm. S. M. Hatch ..... "
Charles W. Tindall ..... "
Thomas O'Connell ..... "
Jesse F. Camp ..... "
John E. Kidd ..... "

COMPANY I.

2D LIEUT. MILNER BROWN	*Killed.*
Charles Edwards	"
James Partington	"
William Whan	"
William Moore	"
C. S. Allen	"
SERGT. Amos M. Eager	*Wounded.*
SERGT. A. T. Vanderlyn	"
CORP Samuel Chalmers	"
CORP. Samuel McQuaid	"
Nathaniel Jackson	"
John T. Laroc	"
John Gordon	"

COMPANY K.

CORP. Isaac Decker	*Killed.*
G. H. Stephens	"
A. S. Holbert	"
John Carroll	"
1ST LIEUT. JAMES FINNEGAN	*Wounded.*
SERGT. W. T. Ogden	"
Henry W. Smith	"

LEFT GENERAL GUIDE.

CORP. H. G. Herrick, of D	*Wounded.*

Killed	34
Wounded	57

That portion of Sickles' most advanced position, from which the 124th was withdrawn on the afternoon of the 2d, was not again occupied by the Union forces during the battle; and a considerable number of our severely wounded remained for several days in the hands of the enemy, and three or four of them did not again re-enter the Federal lines until after they had luxuriated for a season in Southern prisons. Corporal James Scott, to whom particular reference has already been made, gives the following account of what he terms his "Three days with the Johnnies:"

"When our regiment left the hill a Confederate battle line advanced over me and took possession of it, and I lay there three days and three nights in a partly paralyzed state. The rays of the sun at times were terrible. When the Confederate ambulances came up that night for the wounded, a general—whose headquarters were near where I was lying—was walking over the field; and when two of the stretcher bearers came to me, and were about to pick me up, he told them to leave me there as I wasn't worth bothering with. About midnight I heard some one near by talking in earnest tones about the results of the day, and presently saw two Confederate officers walking arm and arm. I must have made some sort of a noise; for one of them remarked 'There is another poor fellow,' and came to me, and asked where I was hurt and if I wanted a drink. Then he passed his canteen to me with the question, 'To what regiment do you belong?' But before my reply was half uttered

he jerked it away, called me a D—— Yankee s———, and made as if he would kick me; at which his comrade, shouting, 'Oh don't!' sprang forward and drew, or rather pushed him away. With that exception the Johnnies were very kind. Several times they took my canteen and crawled out between the lines and filled it with water for me. They gave me food, too, but I couldn't eat it. Some of them expressed their sympathy, said I could not live long, and advised me to make my peace with God. On the afternoon of the second day a squad of soldiers gathered up the dead bodies of eighteen men of our regiment and lay them on a level strip of ground a few yards below me. Then they came and, after taking most of the clothing and all the shoes off of them, arranged the bodies in two rows with the feet together, and left them so. That evening I heard a staff officer deliver to the General I have spoken of, orders from General Longstreet to fall back promptly but not to run. On the afternoon of the third day some of the 14th Regulars came with an ambulance and took me to their regimental hospital."

Statement of Corp. N. B. Kimbark, of Company H—"I was severely wounded in the breast at Gettysburg just after Colonel Ellis fell. I was unconscious for a short time. When I recovered my senses the Rebels were advancing over me. I remained where I fell until the next morning, when one of their officers came along and ordered me to go to the rear. I managed to crawl a rod or so alone. Then he sent a man to assist me. But the fellow said I would die any way, and soon left me. Then I crawled to a fence and lay down again by it. There was a Rebel picket post near me, and one of the men came and gave me a swallow of water from his canteen. Presently another one of them came along with a four gallon earthen jar on his head, which he had just filled at some spring, and stopped and gave me a good drink; after which I fell asleep. When I awoke their pickets had gone; but before long a Rebel battle line advanced past me, and their officers ordered me to crawl farther to the rear. Presently a burial party with picks and shovels came along and I asked them where their hospital was. They

said it was a short distance beyond in a piece of woods—that some of them were going there presently after water, and would take me with them, which they did. It was not a regular hospital —only a sort of stopping place for the wounded. A rebel doctor who was there came to me and inquired where I was wounded. And when I told him I was shot through the lungs, he replied, 'oh, that will not kill you,' gave me some morphine on the blade of a pocket knife, and said there would soon be an ambulance there to take me to the hospital. Just then shells from our batteries began to fall among us, and their ambulance teams were driven up on a run, and the stretcher bearers rushed in among us and carried off all the rebel wounded, but left me sitting there alone, leaning against a tree. There was a small log barn close by, and I crept into it. There were two rebels in there. One of them was very badly wounded and the other one (not wounded) was taking care of him. They did not speak to me, and I lay down on some straw and soon fell asleep. When I awoke there was an ambulance at the door taking in the wounded rebel. I asked them to take me too, but they did not let on that they heard me, and drove off, and I was alone again. Presently I saw some Confederates pass by carrying a wounded officer, and I got on my feet and tried to follow them, for I thought they must be going to some hospital. I managed to get several rods, then my strength failed me and I had to sink down, and they were soon out of sight. But there was a small stream close by and some men who came to get water told me there was a house a short distance ahead with a lot of wounded 'Yanks' in it. After a while I got to this house and remained there two nights. There were eighteen wounded Union soldiers there, but none of them belonged to our regiment. The people who had lived in this house must have fled in great haste, for nothing had been removed. Their clothing hung all around. and the beds were all made and ready for use. The last day I was there I lay down on one of the beds early in the afternoon and went to sleep. I was awakened by the noise of artillery which was so close by that it shook the windows and I looked

out and saw a line of our skirmishers advancing, and one of our batteries shelling the woods ahead of them. Not one of the eighteen men who were with me were able to walk, and I suppose that is the reason why the rebels had left us. We tried to raise a cheer when we saw the boys in blue advancing toward us, but it was a very weak affair. In a few moments a Union field officer and a surgeon came in, and before long our ambulances were there and took us all back to our own hospitals."

Sergeant Thomas Taft of Company C, (subsequently Captain of that gallant company) gives, in a letter written to his father, Daniel Taft, Esq., of Cornwall, about two months after the battle, the following interesting account of his first trip to Richmond, a short sojourn within the limits of the Confederacy, and his return to the Union lines.

"In the fight at Gettysburg on the 2d of July, our regiment was formed in line on the top of a stony hill—a very good position. When first attacked by the rebels we drove them nearly half-way down the hill, when we were met by their second line. . . . Just before our regiment fell back I received a blow on the left hip which knocked me down. I do not know whether it was a spent ball or a piece of shell; at any rate it bruised me severely. Before I could get on my feet again a musket ball passed through my right arm, between the elbow and shoulder. This wound, together with the bruise on my hip, rendered me, for the time being, almost helpless. The enemy's battle line was now but a few feet from me; I could neither fight nor run, and was consequently obliged to surrender.

"Several others belonging to our brigade were captured about the same time. We were all forthwith taken to the rear about half a mile. There were many wounded rebels there, and others were continually being brought in. We remained at that point an hour or two, during which time I had my arm dressed by a young man belonging to the 3d Maine, who happened to have some bandages with him. I saw several rebel surgeons, but they paid no more attention to our wounded—a number of whom lay near me—than if we had been so many dead dogs.

Just before dark the unwounded Union prisoners, together with all of the wounded who were able to stand alone, were placed in a large field, around which a strong guard was posted. We remained in this field until the evening of the 3d, when we were marched to the outskirts of the village (Gettysburg) where we were kept until the 4th, when we were started on what proved to be a forced march for Staunton, Augusta county, Va.

"On the afternoon of the 5th, we passed through Hagerstown, and about two miles beyond moved over ground which a few hours before had been the scene of a bloody engagement between Stewart's command and a force of Union cavalry under Kilpatrick. A considerable number of dead horses, and not a few Union soldiers, were lying on the ground just where they had fallen. The bodies of the officers, and of nearly all the private soldiers, had been stripped of their clothing and left unburied. That night we reached Williamsport on the Potomac. Williamsport is forty miles from Gettysburg, and during that long march all they gave us to eat was one pint of flour, and half a pound of fresh meat, with a little salt. We mixed the flour on pieces of barrel heads and staves, and baked it the best we could on flat stones which we heated by building fires about them. A pontoon bridge of theirs, which a few days before our arrival stretched across the river near that point, had been destroyed by Union cavalry, and all they had left to get us over with was an old scow-built ferry-boat, into which they could crowd but sixty men at a time. There were nearly three thousand of us, and it took them all the next day, and nearly all the following night to ferry us over.

"On the 8th we resumed our march—moved fifteen miles; passing on our way through Martinsburg, which is without exception, the most patriotic place I ever saw. Philadelphia is not to be compared with it. The people told us to keep up our courage for the stars and stripes were coming—and not far in the rear. I was surprised to hear this from people living in Virginia. There was a whole brigade of rebels encamped in and around the town at the time, and by showing us sympathy

they were not only endangering their property but their very lives. The ladies had buttered large baskets of bread, and stood on the sidewalks ready to distribute it to us as we passed.

"Before we reached the town the infantry guard, which encircled us, was ordered to bayonet the very first man who stepped one foot away from the ranks to receive anything from a citizen; and the men of the cavalry guard which formed the second and outer line about us was directed to cut the head off of any person who attempted to pass us anything to eat! And yet, in three instances, I saw young ladies walk right out between the horses, under the drawn sabres of the cavalrymen, and give our boys bread. The ruffians would have shot one of us on the slightest provocation, but innate gallantry forbid doing violence to a woman. After we crossed the river it was three days before they gave us anything to eat again. The first day after, as I have already stated, we marched fifteen miles; the second day we moved nineteen miles and were halted at Winchester, where we remained twenty-four hours longer—and all this time without a morsel of food. Then they issued to us two days' rations (which consisted, all told, of one quart of flour and half a pound of fresh beef) and we were started forward again toward Staunton, which was yet ninety-two miles away, but at the end of five days we were there, that is, all of our number who had not fallen dead by the wayside. About two miles south of the town we were marched in single file up to a pair of bars, where two officers searched us surrounded by a strong guard, and took our knives, tents, rubber blankets and even canteens; and then turned us into a field like a lot of cattle. This field was about two acres in extent. There was but one tree in it, and that was the only shelter we had from sun or rain. At times the rays of the sun were terrible. For five consecutive days it rained in the afternoon, and each time I was wet to the skin, and had to remain so until the sun came out the following mornings and dried my clothes. The days were hot but the night air was damp and cold. Not more than one man in twenty had a blanket, and frequently the majority of us would walk about all night

over our two acre lot, jostling against each other trying to keep our teeth from chattering and our bodies from shivering. Our daily and unvaried rations, while we remained in this prison pen, consisted of a little salt, one pint of flour, and a piece of bacon about one and a half inches square, which was always covered with vermin."

"On the 4th of August they searched us again, took away all the greenbacks they could find about us, and then shipped us to Richmond on a train of dirt cars. We arrived at the Confederate capital on the morning of the 5th, and were marched through the city to the tobacco-warehouses, in which we were stowed away—about three hundred on a floor. The company of three hundred to which I was attached, occupied one large room, or floor, with four small windows in it. As soon as we entered it, we were kindly informed by the guards that the first man's head that appeared outside, or even in, one of these windows, would certainly have a bullet put through it.

"After remaining in the ware-houses two days and a night, we were taken to Belle Isle, which is about one mile from the city. There they had a slight earthwork thrown up, which enclosed about one and a half acres of ground. In this small space they crowded four thousand prisoners. About three thousand of these had tents. The remaining thousand—to which class of unfortunates I belonged—slept on such narrow strips of ground as they could find between the tents. Our rations here differed some from what they had been at Staunton. Bread, soup, and meat, now made up our bill of fare; but the quantity was so small, and the quality was so poor, that we were continually half famished. I often saw men pick bones from the dirt and filth, and pound them up with stones that they might suck the nutriment from them. It was no uncommon thing to see two men staggering along holding between them a comrade who could yet use his feet, but was too weak to stand alone. Many of our number died here.

"On the 28th of August the majority of the survivors were taken back to Richmond and placed in the tobacco-warehouses

again. But on the morning of the 29th we were put on a train of cars, and about noon found ourselves at City Point. The transport New York lay at the wharf, and when we saw the stars and stripes floating from her mast-head, there went up a shout which came from the bottom of our thankful hearts; and if it was not loud and strong it was only because we had not the strength to make it so.

"As soon as we were taken on board the transport, half a loaf of bread, and one of Uncle Sam's rations of boiled pork was issued to us, and oh, what a feast we had! Unfortunately a large number, instead of eating a little at a time, devoured the whole almost the very minute they received it, and consequently, for a time, suffered more from the effects of over-eating, than they had before endured for lack of food. At dusk that evening, the New York was made fast to the steamer wharf at Fortress Monroe, but at 9 o'clock we were under way again. At 7 o'clock the next morning we were landed at Annapolis. Those who were able to walk were conducted to College Green barracks, where we were furnished with new suits of clothes, and plenty of wholesome food. On Thursday, September 3d, all the New York troops were taken out to the new Parol Camp and placed under the command of Captain Murray of our regiment, who was wounded and captured at Chancellorsville, May 3d. I am glad that he has been placed over us, for he is a pleasant and good officer."

CHAPTER XI.

FOLLOWING LEE BACK TO THE RAPPAHANNOCK.—WAPPING HEIGHTS.

THE retreat of the shattered, defeated, and almost disheartened veteran army of Northern Virginia, after the desperate three days' battle of Gettysburg, was begun as soon as the dark shades of the night of the 4th of July settled down on the bloody field, and kindly concealed their movements from the advanced lookouts of their victorious foes. Early on the morning of the 5th, Sedgwick's corps (the 6th) moved rapidly across the battle-field, down the Fairfield road, and a considerable body of cavalry cantered off on the Chambersburg pike, in pursuit. During the forenoon, detached companies of men moved hither and thither along our front, gathering up small arms, thousands of which were yet lying scattered over what had, previous to that time, been regarded as disputed ground; and burial parties were sent to scour the field in all directions, and inter every human form they could find, whether dressed in blue, or in grey and butternut.

On the 6th, all those who were deemed unfit for active and arduous duty, were sent to the field hospitals; and during the day the bulk of the army moved off, taking the roads which lead toward Emmettsburg. Our corps, however, remained on the field. A storm was brewing, and when evening approached, all who had tents put them up, dug trenches about and crowded under them, intent on a good rest and sound sleep ere they started off on, what all believed was to be a long and rapid march. About two hours after midnight, I was awakened to receive, read, and sign an order. It was from Division Headquarters, had been countersigned by our brigade adjutant-general, and read as follows: "You will cause your command to be aroused at once, see

that they prepare and eat their breakfast without delay, and have everything made ready for moving at a moment's notice."

Before we had finished eating our breakfast and rolling our tents, the storm was upon us. We now had with us but 150 men with muskets, and nine commissioned officers, all told. Captains Silliman and Crist, with a considerable number of our rank and file who had participated in the battle, had been sent to the corps hospital where Surgeon Thompson, Chaplain Bradner, and several able-bodied enlisted men were ordered to remain and care for the wounded and sick. At daybreak we were under way, moved in a southerly direction, passed through Emmettsburg, and notwithstanding the severity of the storm and the continually deepening mud, did not bivouac for the night until we had reached Mechanicstown, which is distant not less than twenty miles from our starting point east of Gettysburg.

At half past five o'clock the next morning (8th) we resumed our onward march, and did not halt for over ten minutes at a time until we had traveled twenty-three miles—passed through and were a two hours' march south of Frederick.

The storm was abating somewhat, yet rain had continued to fall heavily at intervals throughout the day. Some portion of the road over which we marched was Macadamized and covered only with a slight coating of thin mud and shallow pools of slush; but in other places the mud was deep, and several of my men who had lost one of their shoes "away down under ground" and thrown away the other, kept their pants rolled above their knees and declared they would "wade it through bare-footed, sink or swim." Late in the afternoon, just before we reached Frederick, one of our brigade staff officers rode down the column, saying to the commander of each regiment in a most serious tone of voice, "The colonel commanding directs that you see to it that your regiment appears to good advantage when we pass through the village." This staff officer also informed me that "a delegation from the *gallus* 7th New York Yankee-greyback Militia, with *biled* shirts and silk umbrellas were drawn up behind a rail fence along the road a short distance ahead, waiting to pay

their respects to some of their former comrades now in the 124th." But before we had reached the spot the majority of them had returned to their quarters; and when some one pointed to us and said, that is the 124th, the few who remained no sooner set eyes on us than they too fled, swearing, I presume, that they never knew one of us.

Ten days before we had marched through that village with clothes brushed, banners flying, and polished arms reflecting the rays of the sun; intent on keeping between the invading victorious and most mighty army the Confederacy ever put in the field, and our threatened capitol, which we were resolved to defend to the last extremity. Since then we had met that grand southern army even handed, and defeated it in the most ably managed, desperate, and deadly battle ever fought on American soil; and were now pursuing its depleted legions in their inglorious flight back to the forests of Virginia.

We had been forced to go down and fight a battle on free soil, and were returning victors. But I do think, without exaggeration, when we that day retraced our steps through Frederick City we were the most unsoldierly, sorry looking victorious Veteran Army it has been the lot of any human being of this century to look upon. For two days we had been bespattering each other with mud and slush, and soaked with rain which was then falling in torrents. Our guns and swords were covered with rust; our pockets were filled with dirt; muddy water oozed from the toes of the footmen's government shoes at every step, ran out of the tops of the horsemans boots and dropped from the ends of the fingers noses and chins of all.

On the 9th we changed direction to the west, moved down the Hagerstown road, over the Catoctoη mountain, through Middletown and on, up, and about half way over South mountain. This day's march was decidedly severe, though the distance traveled was but twelve miles. On the 10th we made another twelve miles, halting for several hours at Keedeysville and bivouacking in the evening at Millpoint. On the morning of the 11th we moved forward about one mile and rested until 4 P. M.,

when with loaded pieces we advanced about two miles, passing by Roxbury Mills: and when night came on, rested on our arms in line of battle with the assurance from our superiors that a heavy force of the enemy were just ahead of us, though notwithstanding our sharp lookout through the day we had failed to get sight of one of them. Here Lieutenant Ramsdell rejoined the regiment, informed us that after much tribulation he had succeeded in delivering the bodies of our lamented colonel and major to their friends, and was directed to resume the duties of adjutant. The following is his report of this most difficult undertaking.

CAMP NEAR WILLIAMSPORT, MD. JULY 11, 1863.

CAPT. C. H. WEYGANT., *Com'dg. 124th N. Y. Vol. Infantry.*

SIR:—I have the honor to report that after receiving your orders and escort, I succeeded in taking the bodies of our late colonel and major to their friends. The details of the journey I will give as concisely as possible.

The detail of eight men, private Fisher of Company "C," and "Sam," the colonel's servant, constituted my party which left the vicinity of Gettysburg, at about 10½ o'clock A.M. of the 3d of July, and marched about three miles to the farm-house of one Max Lydig, who had a wagon with a covered tilt suitable for our purpose. After trying to hire or buy the vehicle and a pair of horses without success, I ordered the men to put the horses to the wagon, placed the bodies carefully inside, stuffing straw between the stretchers to prevent any shifting, gave Lydig the order and emphasized it with the sharp end of my saber, upon which he took the driver's seat with alacrity. Posting Fisher by his side to prevent any unpleasantness, we reached the main road about a mile southeasterly. Here, sending the escort back to the regiment, we took the turnpike for Westminster, stopping only a few minutes at a time to breathe the heavy draft horses who were unaccustomed to journeys of this sort. The sun was so hot, and shade being scanty, I covered the bodies and wagon tilt with foliage. The provost guard stopped us occasionally, but gave us no trouble on my showing my orders.

We arrived in Westminster about dark, where Quarter-master Travis found a native carpenter who made two rough boxes, in which we packed the bodies in ice, after dressing them as well as we were able.

I had little difficulty in procuring transportation to Baltimore, as Colonel Berdan, commanding our brigade, had instructed me on this point. "Sam," I sent with my horse and his own to Baltimore, by road. I left Westminster about five o'clock on the morning of July 4th, and

now my difficulties commenced. The confusion among the railway officials resulting from scare and contradictory orders, caused us to be switched and reswitched ; twice was my charge taken off the car by the train men, and as often replaced—the wounded who were being sent to the hospital on the open platform cars in the scorching rays of a July sun, assisting me. At last an Irish Major whose left arm was broken at the elbow by a musket ball, seating himself on the box containing Colonel Ellis, swore he would brain the very next man who meddled in the matter—and he looked as if he meant what he said. We arrived at Baltimore about four o'clock in the afternoon, and as my wounded allies were gone, my troubles re-commenced. Martial law existed in the city and a general stampede was the order of the day. The rebel cavalry might arrive any moment. Troops were hurrying to and fro, artillery commanded the approaches to the city, and strong squads of provost guard patroled the streets. Trucks, loaded with furniture blocked narrow alleys, carts and wagons commanded any price, and the railway trains leaving the city were crowded to overflowing. Many of the houses were ornamented with tiny flags, showing sympathy with our army, while many others were shut up and barricaded. The most intense excitement prevailed. There seemed little chance of going any further with the remains of our brave colonel and major, and to leave them was not to be thought of. Placing Fisher in charge, of the bodies I made the best of my way to General Schenck's Headquarters, but access to the general was impossible, the same as regards his adjutant-general. A gentlemanly aide told me dead bodies were not important, compared to live ones, said there was no time to think about such things, and advised me to have my friends quietly buried, *if I could*. I was at my wit's ends. I went to a telegraph office, and gave the operator telegrams for Dr. Sam Ellis, for Major Cromwell's brother, for the father of Lieutenant J. Milnor Brown, and for Major Cromwell's mother ; all of which had been given me by Colonel Cummins, who I saw at our corps hospital just before I started. I was told they would be dispatched as soon as the military business would permit.

I went again to General Schenck's Headquarters, and this time by dint of perseverance got to the office of Colonel Don Piatt, who was chief of staff to the general commanding. I stated my business to an aide who said I could not see Colonel Piatt, but that he had heard of Colonel Ellis through Captain Ben Piatt, and gave me a detail of men in charge of a non-commissioned officer with a carte blanche as far as concerned the city, and an *order* to the railway officials to take my cargo and party on the 8.30 train the same morning.

We now took possession of the first truck we met, dumped its load in the street, and adopting the military way of enforcing orders, had no trouble in compelling an undertaker to drop every thing and furnish

metallic cases in the place of the rough pine boxes, and at half-past eight o'clock were en route for New York.

I arrived in Jersey City early Sunday morning and was compelled to leave the bodies there, as a permit was necessary to enable them to cross the river. So I drove directly to Dr. Samuel Ellis's in Third Avenue and performed my unpleasant duty as gently as I could.

It was now so late I could not get to Cornwall and New Windsor, until the 5 P. M. train via. Fishkill. I sent a telegram to my father who was able to advise the Cromwells of the Major's death the same afternoon.

I arrived in Newburgh late Sunday night, and Monday went to Cornwall and told the Cromwells all of the sad news that remained to tell. The same day, July 7th, I found Mrs. Colonel Ellis in New York, and delivered some little things the Colonel had spoken of many times during his life, for he had often speculated of his death, and had so instructed me in case anything should happen to him. He had also called my attention to two silk handkerchiefs he wore about his waist, saying how handy they would be for a bandage or a tourniquet, and instructed me in making the latter for different parts of the limbs, making use of a key or stone or stick for pressure on the artery. After having seen Mrs. Ellis, your orders being completed, I returned to Baltimore the same night, and next morning started for the regiment, which I found this morning at 8 o'clock, and reported for duty.

Yours respectfully,

H. P. RAMSDELL.

First Lieutenant and acting-adjutant.

Early Saturday morning, July 12, four or five batteries which had come up during the night, moved to and occupied the most commanding positions in the vicinity; a column of infantry hurried past and deployed in battle line about an eighth of a mile in front of where we had spent the night, and the division to which our regiment belonged was ordered to a new position half a mile to the left; a train of ammunition wagons appeared on the scene with a fresh supply of cartridges, shot and shell, and everything indicated that our commander-in-chief expected to fight another great battle at that point. The storm was not yet over, and considerable rain fell during the forenoon; but about 3 P. M. the sun came out and we all expected that a general advance would be immediately ordered; yet hour after hour slipped by without

bringing the expected "move forward," and when the gloom of night began to gather about us, the men set to work with a will, putting up their muslin shelters, for it was raining again.

The 13th was a most gloomy Sunday. A drizzling rain fell from morn till night. Several times during the day orders came to strike tents, and on each occasion we hurried in line supposing we were to move forthwith against the unseen foe; but no advance was ordered and at dusk we once more spread our blankets on the wet strip of ground where we had lain the previous night, and undisturbed slept soundly until morning. About 9 A. M. on the 14th several mounted Union scouts, who had been sent out at daybreak, came galloping back with a report that the enemy had actually recrossed the swollen *impassable* Potomac, "bag and baggage." Half an hour later, the so long expected order reached us, and our division immediately moved forward. After advancing about two miles we passed over and were halted behind a line of earthworks of considerable strength, which had evidently been occupied but a few hours before. The camp fires, over which Lee's rear guard had boiled the last cups of coffee it was destined any considerable portion of the army of Northern Virginia should ever drink north of the Potomac, were yet burning and, a fresh supply of brush being added, soon blazing away again, under the tin cups of our always dry—no matter how wet they are—boys in blue. About 2 P. M. the commissary wagons of our brigade were driven up with the usual clatter and shouts of "Hi! ho!—grub, grub, here's your grub," and the familiar reply "Turn out for your salt 'hoss,' sugar, coffee and hard-tack," echoed along the line.

During an active campaign there is nothing of frequent occurrence so universally appreciated by all concerned as the issuing and receiving of rations. One week of "soldier life on the march" seldom fails to develop in the majority of men a habit of obeying literally the injunction "Take therefore no thought for the morrow;" and if on the first day of the week you issue to the men of an old regiment rations for five days, you may count with certainty on finding the haversacks of fully one-third of them

empty, before the end of the fourth day. But the fact of the refilling of the empty haversacks with government rations was not all that made these occasions enjoyable. The mule drivers —a class of non-combatants never particularly noted for over-strict adherence to the truth, nor yet for their conscientious scruples aginst borrowing from strangers they never expected to meet again—generally brought to their especial friends in the ranks some article of food not issued by Uncle Sam, but which of course they had paid some southern farmer a "mighty big price" for. The quartermasters, and their assistants too, were in nine cases out of ten, whole-souled, good-natured fellows who seemed to think that one of their chief duties was to "wake up the boys" and make everybody feel good whenever they visited their regiments; and they generally had some daring personal exploit to talk about, new joke to crack, or a wonderful story to tell.

Our commissary sergeant (afterward quartermaster) Ellis Post was now the heaviest man in the 124th. He had been growing fatter and fatter ever since the date of his enlistment, and was almost always—when not studying over some contemplated mischief, or bent on carrying out some piece of devilment already planned—exceedingly jolly. But on this occasion, when the company commissaries came to his wagon and asked for about half the number of rations that had formerly been called for, he was so forcibly reminded of the many brave ones who had been wont to welcome him, but who, alas, would never greet him again, that he was obliged to depend almost exclusively on the sense of feeling to determine what the barrels in front of him contained. He had visited the regiment but twice since the terrible battle at Gettysburg, and when a newly appointed sergeant ventured to remind him that he was dealing out double the quantity of rations asked for, Post hurled at the innocent honest fellow's head a huge rib piece of salt pork which he had just hooked from the brine, called him a worthless, brainless, galoot, wondered that such a fool had been sent to draw rations, declared that the rest of the boys were out with Ellis and Cromwell on picket, and that

he could whip any worthless vagabond who dared say they were not.

While Post was dealing out at least a hundred more rations than we had men in the regiment, quartermaster Travis, who had come up with the wagon but did not find it convenient on that occasion to superintend the work of his assistants, related to a group of attentive listeners the following particulars of a grand charge he had led in person during the recent battle:

"When the fighting commenced at Gettysburg, the Third Corps wagon train was ordered to park at Westminster, which you know is located about thirty miles southeast of Gettysburg, and is the terminus of a railroad which runs into Baltimore. Well, when the order reached us we were about five miles from the place. There was only a very light guard with the train, and for several hours we had been doing our level best to keep out of the way of Jeff. Stuart's cavalry, squads of which were hovering around our flanks and ever and anon making a dash at some weak point, and cutting loose and driving off a team of mules, and of course the wagons from which the mules had been driven, not only partially blocked the road but had to be abandoned." At this point an attentive listener broke in with the question "I say, Lieutenant, did Jeff's fellers gobble the mule louts too, or did they ride off in an opposite direction on"— Here Travis in turn broke in on his interrogator, with a "shut up your mouth until I get through," and resumed his story.

"Well, the wagons of our brigade were in the center of the train, which was several miles long, and just as we reached Westminster, word came in that Jeff's troopers had been called off from the flanks, and were making things red hot at the extreme rear of the train, whereupon I was ordered to get together the mounted teamsters, arm them with such weapons as could be found in the brigade wagons, and hasten out to the assistance of the guard and teamsters, and help bring in the hindermost portion of the train. I soon got together a company of about twenty men mounted on the very best mules in the brigade, then ransacked the baggage wagons and succeeded in finding a carbine,

rifle, pistol or sabre for each of them, and placing myself at their head, led them off at a lively jog toward the scene of action. As soon as we had passed the last wagon, which, by the way, was being brought in by two leaders and one tongue mule on a dead run, without guard or driver, I halted and deployed my command in a heavy skirmish line directly across the road. Our sudden and bold approach caused an advance squad of the enemy which had just before our arrival made a dash for and nearly captured that last wagon, to fall back into a piece of woods. After that, for a few minutes everything was serene—not a Reb in sight, and the only noise that reached our ears was the clattering thunder of our wagons, which, safe behind my protecting line, were being hurried farther, and yet farther away—then suddenly there came a rustling clattering sound from that piece of woods in front, and out of it came a squadron of Jeff's troopers, making directly for us on a keen jump. I immediately ordered my gallant boys to open fire, but somehow nobody's ammunition fitted his piece. There was now nothing left us to do but make a counter charge. Just then several bullets whistled among us and one of our mules was wounded in the tip of his right ear, at which—though my men without exception displayed the most admirable coolness and waited patiently for the order "Charge, my hearties, charge" which I was just in the act of shouting—his brother mules with one accord dropped their tails between their legs, rested their under lips against their breasts, settled back on their haunches, wheeled about, stretched out their necks again, defiantly shook their natural weapons of defence at the foe and, as if partaking of the noble impulse which actuated their riders, the brave brutes, unable longer to restrain themselves—charged! yes, boys, boldly charged right through the solid lines of a—a—Union cavalry regiment which was advancing from the village to co-operate with us." "Well, Lieutenant, what did *you* do then—if I may now be permitted to ask a question"—put in the sergeant whose first inquiry had been so unceremoniously cut short. And the answer came, "Why, you ass, the cavalry commander ranked me and I

turned over my forces to him and hastened to the rear for additional reinforcements."

The report of the enemy's escape across the Potomac, which our scouts brought in that morning, was found to be correct in every particular, and at early daylight on the 15th the advance brigades of Meade's army were moving down the northeastern shore of the Potomac, on the roads leading toward Berlin. Our division started at 6 A. M., marched across the country in an easterly direction until it struck the Frederick City pike near Fairplay, moved down the pike about four miles and then,—changing direction to the right—passed over the battle-field and through the bullet-scarred forests of Antietam. We reached Sharpsburg about noon, bivouacked on the outskirts of the village three hours, and then moved on down the Harper's Ferry road four miles and pitched our tents for the night.

At 5 P. M. on the 11th, after a well conducted march of ten miles, we bivouacked in a piece of woods three miles west of Knoxville. On the 17th, we crossed the Potomac on a pontoon bridge at Harper's Ferry and spent the night three miles beyond the river. On the 18th, we moved eight miles, and ate our evening meal and spent the night at Hillsborough.

Early Sunday morning (the 19th) we heard distant thundering of artillery, which appeared to come from the direction of Snicker's Gap, and were hurried off in that direction for about seven miles. Then a halt was sounded, and after resting half an hour on the sides of the road, we were directed to file into an adjacent field and pitch our tents. About noon a Union spy, dressed in the uniform of a Confederate cavalryman, rode into our lines. The fellow attracted considerable attention, and his pompous, lordly bearing, as he rode through our camp on his way to head-quarters, caused a vast amount of merriment. During the afternoon there was preaching or other religious services in nearly every regiment in the division.

On the 20th we received marching orders about 3 A. M., had breakfast before daylight, moved eighteen miles and encamped before dark in a piece of woods near Upperville, where we rested

undisturbed until about noon on the 21st, when an order detailing the 124th for a tour of picket duty reached our camp. Blankets and tents were soon rolled and strapped, and a staff officer —who had brought the order and remained in camp while we were packing up—conducted us to the picket line which had been established about two miles beyond where our division was lying. Nothing of especial interest occurred that night, and the forenoon of the 22d was passed very pleasantly, but while eating our dinner, we heard the sound of bugles, and presently an order reached me which stated that our division was moving southward on the Warrenton pike, and directed me to withdraw my regiment from the picket line, move rapidly forward and join it at the earliest possible moment. An hour later we came up with the rear of our brigade and took position in the moving column. About three P. M. we changed direction to the right, and it became very apparent that the ground on which we were to bivouac, lay in Manassas gap. After an afternoon's march of at least fourteen miles, the 124th filed from the road into the same field where the regiment, on that bitter cold night nearly nine months before, had, hungry and blanketless, shivered the dark hours away. But few tents were pitched that evening and not a few of our number lay awake for hours, rolled in their warm blankets, looking off toward that dark steep mountain side which had been the scene of our regiment's first skirmish—thinking of the *then* and *now*, and of events that had intervened. *Then* the regiment numbered for duty over seven hundred rank and file, and had a full field and staff, and twenty-five line officers—*now*, though Captain Silliman with Lieutenant Crissie, and about thirty convalescents had recently rejoined us, there were present in the battalion less than two hundred, all told. Where were the absent ones? Several times during the night there came echoing through the gap the sound of one, two, and sometimes three or four rifle shots, fired in quick succession, which told that the videttes of the opposing forces were not far apart, and caused me to wonder what the morrow had in store for us.

On the morning of the 23d, it was rumored that General Meade had resolved to push a large force through the gap and attempt to fall upon an isolated corps of Lee's army which was reported to be lying at Front Royal, on the opposite side of the mountain. Our corps, the Third, was now commanded by Major General French, and had, since the battle of Gettysburg, been strengthened by a division of new troops nearly eight thousand strong. We were a day's march in advance of the other corps of the army, and for that reason I presume General French was selected as the leader of this bold and apparently hazardous undertaking, the success of which evidently depended on its being commenced immediately and prosecuted with the utmost vigor. Our division, which was yet commanded by General Ward, had led the corps to the gap and bivouacked several miles in advance of the other divisions.

When the rumor referred to reached us we were eating breakfast, and before we had finished, the attention was sounded from brigade head-quarters. The 124th was soon in line, but after standing to arms ten or fifteen minutes without noticing any further indications of an immediate movement, I ordered them to stack arms and break ranks, at which not a few of the boys hurried back to their camp fires, bent on having another cup of coffee before they started.

General French had, it appears, decided to have the three divisions which composed his corps, move through the gap in the same order in which they had advanced to it; but for some, to me, inexplicable reason we did not leave the fields in which we had spent the night until the sun was four hours high. General Ward and staff had moved up and planted the division flag only a few rods behind our gunstacks, and Captain Jackson had just remarked, "It is five minutes past ten," when I heard the General order his horse and say to one of his aids, who was in the act of mounting, "Let my old brigade take the lead—tell Colonel Berdan to move forward immediately." In five minutes our column was formed and under way. We soon reached and passed through a light line of cavalry pickets, and there were then no

Union troops ahead of our brigade except a company of mounted men, which acted as an advance guard and with very little difficulty forced back the enemy's scouts, which had spent the night in front of our picket line.

We moved slowly and cautiously, and all went well until about noon, when, just after we had passed the little village of Lynden, the crackling of musketry, not more than an eighth of a mile away, caused a halt to be ordered.

The clatter in front lasted but a minute or two, and while we stood there waiting for orders to move on, a man in company "G" began reciting in school-boy fashion, Campbell's "Hohenlinden." At every pause he was greeted with some such remarks as "Choke him off, give him a hard tack, or see his knees shake." But the fellow good-naturedly kept on till he came to, "Then shook the hills with thunder riv'n," when a bullet went whistling past within a few feet of his head, at which—in obedience to an irresistible impulse every truly brave soldier understands—he first dodged and then, as if to make it appear the dodging was done as a joke, shouted in a loud voice, "I say, master, I didn't mean any harm—I—I won't do so any more." But his remarks were unheeded. The time for joking and mirth-making had passed. There was evidently stern work close at hand.

The two regiments of sharp-shooters, with the 3d and 4th Maine, 63d Pennsylvania and 20th Indiana, were hurried forward and formed in a heavy skirmish line which ran across the road and up the sides of the mountain. The 124th, 99th Pennsylvania and 86th New York were retained as a supporting force and remained in column. The order to move forward was given. The supporting column kept close to the skirmish line, which could move but slowly as the regiments who were on the flanks had continually to push their way through thick brush or climb over logs and rocks, which covered the sides of the mountain. Presently one of General Ward's aids, who had been to the rear, rode up and reported that General Prince with Humphrey's White Diamond division was close at hand ready to support us. Our skirmish line kept up a straggling fire, which, as we neared the

western end of the gap gradually increased, while the enemy's bullets coming thicker, and yet thicker, hissed and whistled through the air, but fortunately passed harmlessly over the heads of those who were moving in column and buried themselves in the sides of the mountain above and behind us. The enemy now evidently had a skirmish line facing ours and falling back as we advanced. Occasionally a wounded man would be borne past, or could be seen hobbling along the mountain side on his way to the rear. Presently as we came to a place where the roads turned suddenly to the right, "Halt—halt—halt—spoken in an undertone, ran along the skirmish line. A solid battle line of the foe had been discovered on the top of a lofty ridge which loomed up directly in front of us.

General Ward soon appeared upon the scene and virtually assumed the immediate direction of our brigade. The two regiments of sharp-shooters, with the 20th Indiana and 63d Pennsylvania, had formed the right and left of our skirmish line, and had been moving high up on the sides of the mountain. When the order to halt was given, portions of the lines of each of these regiments were in plain sight of the enemy's battle line; and they were therefore pushed boldly forward until they came within short range of the flanks of the enemy's position, when taking shelter behind the trees and rocks, they opened and maintained a brisk and deliberate fire, picking off not a few of the foe, and causing no little consternation in his ranks. Chaplain Barbour of the sharp-shooters—one of the best shots in our army—who, with his trusty rifle in hand moved with the skirmishers, soon caught sight of a Confederate marksman posted in the top of a tree, and by several carefully directed shots so demoralized the poor fellow that he dropped his own gun, descended to the ground begging for mercy and ran into our lines declaring that the first bullet had taken off his hat and that the next two had singed his hair.

The two Maine regiments were mean time caused to *ploy* in solid line, and ordered to creep cautiously up the steep side of the hill in front and make a direct assault on the enemy's center.

As soon as this assaulting line began to advance, General Ward placed himself at the head of our supporting column and led us through the trees and brush and over the rocks after it. As we neared the thickly wooded crest where the foe was posted we came to a cleared field and the General, without halting the head of the column, gave in a gruff undertone the order, "Forward into line." The 124th being in rear of the 99th and 86th was obliged to double-quick for some distance, and before the line was completed, the enemy caught sight of, opened a terrific fire on, and checked the advance of the Maine regiments. Our partly formed supporting line now slackened its pace but did not immediately halt. The right of the 124th was soon in position, and as I hurried the left forward the enemy's bullets began to whistle close to our heads. As the men of Company G came straggling up almost out of breath, I noticed David W. Dewitt, who had formerly been one of our general guides, and riding up to him was in the act of ordering him to follow me, as I wished to have him move as a marker to show in what direction the line was to be prolonged; but just then a bullet hit him and he fell dead beside me. We were soon close to the advance line and General Ward shouted to its leader "Move forward and clear that hill or I will send the 86th and 124th through your ranks to do it for you." This was too much for veterans who boasted of having fought under Phil. Kearney, and with one of the wildest and most determined shouts I ever heard, they rushed forward, gained the summit, poured a volley point blank into the ranks of the foe, charged forward through the smoke and cleared the hill —taking a considerable number prisoners, and routing the balance, who fled panic-stricken down the opposite slope. General Ward now, in obedience to orders which had reached him during the advance, halted the brigade and directed Colonel Berdan to reform and extend his skirmish line.

It was soon discovered that the force which had just been routed was rallying to the support of a Confederate regiment which held position on another hill, similar to the one the gallant sons of Maine had carried, and but a quarter of a mile beyond it.

We of course expected that as soon as the skirmish line was reformed the order would come for our brigade to move on and drive the enemy from that also, but our corps commander had willed it otherwise. After an hour's delay the Excelsior brigade of Prince's division reached, and was led through, our picket line by F. B. Spinola, a newly appointed general officer who was said to have brought with him to the field two or three newspaper reporters, and to be "thirsting for glory." And most gallantly did he lead his command down the slope, through the valley and on up the hill beyond—right against the enemy's line. The clatter of musketry settled to a continuous roar, and clouds of powder smoke shut the combatants from our view. Presently shout after shout rent the air, the continuous roar dwindled to a feeble crackling again, and as the smoke lifted, we could see the Excelsiors reforming their line just where that of the enemy had been.

The Union loss in this assault was quite severe. Several field officers fell, and General Spinola was carried to the rear "covered with glory" and bleeding from two wounds; but his successor—Colonel Farnum of the 70th New York—suffered the brigade to halt only long enough to reform his line, when he caused the "Forward" to be sounded, at which the White Diamonds, with another wild shout that made the woods ring again, rushed on after the disorganized retreating foe, and with charge after charge drove him from hill top to hill top, down the western slope of the mountain toward Front Royal, into which place the brave Excelsiors declared they would have followed him, had not their leader been overtaken by an aid who brought him positive orders to give o'er the pursuit.

The afternoon was now well nigh spent. "In the mean time," writes a correspondent from army head-quarters—which during the movements referred to had been located on a mountain peak that overlooked the entire field of operations—"word was received by General Meade that the rebel corps which had moved down the valley was returning, leaving the impression that it was their intention to make the desperate stand and give

us the decisive battle at that point. Acting upon this information General Meade directed General French to suspend his main operations for the present and mass his troops in rear of the points already gained, and ordered up the bulk of his army in anticipation of a battle on the following morning. The narrow gap was crowded that night with troops packed in dense masses so thick as to be scarcely able to lie down. . . The dispositions for battle were all made as the troops arrived during the evening, and at early daylight we had a line of battle which, if it was not very extensive, was certainly most formidable. It stretched from mountain top to mountain top, across the mouth of the gap, and would have defied assault. But no assault came. When daylight appeared the fact was revealed that the enemy had wholly disappeared. A detachment from the Third corps was ordered forward into Front Royal, arriving there only in time to see the dust of the enemy's rear column moving southward."

The only member of the 124th killed in this affair was David W. Dewitt, of Company G. Seven or eight of our number were hit by partly spent bullets, but no one was so severely wounded as to make it necessary for him to leave the regiment, except Corporal Harrison Bull, of Company B.

Our brigade spent the night of the 23d on the hill it had so gallantly carried. On the 24th, about 1 P. M. we began to retrace our steps down the side of the mountain; and on reaching the road moved back through the gap at a rapid gait, halting only a few moments at a time until we were near Springfield, when the order came to bivouac for the night. On the 25th, we marched about fourteen miles, passing through Salem. On the 26th made ten miles, moving through and encamping two miles south of Warrentown.

The great Gettysburg, or summer campaign of 1863, was now at an end. Lee's army had halted and was intrenching itself in the vicinity of Culpepper, and his videttes were once more to be seen lounging under the trees along the southern shore of the Rappahannock. Meade had resolved to give his army a few

weeks' rest, and his picket posts were again established along the northern shore of the same insignificant river; across which, as of old, the opposing sentinels, instead of sending bullets at each other, leaned on their guns and shouted such greetings as, "I say, Johnnies, any objection to our fishing in this stream,"—"Not a bit, hope you catch a right smart lot, but Yanks, have you uns got lots of coffee," and then a beckoning of the finger which generally meant, "Come out in the stream the first chance you get and we will meet you half way, and trade you a Richmond paper for a package of coffee." Now it was the duty of officers on both sides to prevent these exchanges, but they were nevertheless of almost daily occurrence.

CHAPTER XII.

AT SULPHUR SPRINGS AND CULPEPPER—CENTREVILLE CAMPAIGN.

ABOUT the middle of July, I was instructed to select three commissioned officers and six enlisted men from the regiment, who in my judgment, were proper persons to send north on recruiting service, and forward a list of their names to corps head-quarters. That there was a prospect of swelling our ranks to something like their original proportions was most welcome news. David W. Dewitt, Charles P. F. Fisher, and Lieutenant Milner Brown, were the only persons whose names had been added to the muster rolls of the regiment since our departure from Goshen, over ten months before; and after two of these names, there was to be written before the next muster day, the words "Killed in battle." Dewitt joined Company G, at camp Ellis, September 16th, 1862, and was killed at Wapping Heights, Va., July 23d, 1863. Fisher enlisted in Company C at Lovettsville, Loudon county, Va., on the 28th day of October, 1862, and was yet in the land of the living, but unfortunately was reported, "absent without leave." He, however, subsequently returned to duty, was wounded fighting bravely in the front rank of his company, captured by the enemy, and died—for want of sufficient food, (I will not write it "of starvation") in that foul prison pen at Andersonville. Lieutenant Brown joined the regiment near Gum Springs, Loudon county, Va., June 22d, and was killed at Gettysburg, Penn., July 2d, 1863.

In addition to our permanent losses already recorded,

Sergeant John Cowdry, of Co. D.

John Hall, of.....	Co.	D.	John H. H. Conklin, of.....	Co.	G.
Angus Carman, of...	"	H.	James W. Parsons, of..	"	E.
Alfred Yeomans, of..	"	B.	John W. Taylor, of.....	"	E.

had died of disease contracted in the line of duty,

Samuel D. Latham, of	Co.	G.	John C. Storms, of.....	Co.	B.
John Van Houten, of	"	F.	Hugh Topping, of.....	"	A.

had been discharged because of physical disability, and a large number of our severely wounded had been either mustered out or transferred to the veteran reserve corps. It was certainly time some determined effort was made to add to our numbers if we expected to retain our regimental organization.

Captain Silliman was the most experienced officer among us as to the details of recruiting service. He was also, at the time, so worn down physically as to be unfit for active duty. I therefore resolved to place his name at the head of the list called for, and consulted him in my selection of the others. After due deliberation the list was made out and forwarded, and on the 27th day of July, it came back to us in the following shape.

"GENERAL ORDERS NO. 20."

HEADQUARTERS 3D ARMY CORPS, UPPERVILLE, VA., JULY 22D, 1863.

The following named officers, and enlisted men, detailed in compliance with circular from War Department, A. G. O., dated July 3d, 1863, will report without delay to the Commanding Officer of the Rendezvous for their State.

In States which have more than one Rendezvous, the detachments for the respective regiments will report to the Commanding Officer of that Rendezvous nearest to which the regiment was recruited and organized.

* * * * * * * * *

124th New York Vols.	Captain William Silliman.	
	2d Lieutenant Charles T. Crissey,	
	2d Lieutenant James A. Grier,	
	Sergeant William Mead	Co. C.
	" J. H. Hanford	" B.
	" J. A. Beakes	" E.
	" J. J. Crawford	" K.
	Corporal J. Van Zile	" I.
	" G. Bertholf	" D.

By command of

MAJOR GENERAL FRENCH.

W. F. A. TORBERT, A. D. C. & A. A. A. Genl.

Official.

Headquarters, 1st Div, 3d Corps July 27, 1863.

(Sgd.) F. BIRNEY, Capt., & A. A. G.

Official.

Headquarters, 2d Brig. 1st Div. 3d Corps, July 27, 1863.

GEORGE O. MARDEN Lt. & A. A. A. G.

On the 28th, Lieutenant Colonel Cummins, who had just returned to, and assumed command of the regiment, issued sergeant's warrants to Corporals Van Zile and Bertholf. On the morning of the 29th, Captain Silliman and the lieutenants and sergeants above named took their departure; and the regiment lost three able commissioned, and five first-class non-commissioned officers; for sergeant Mead was the only one of the party who ever returned to active and permanent duty with the 124th, and he did not get back to us until January, 1865.

On the afternoon of the last day of July, our brigade moved about three miles and we pitched our tents at Sulphur Springs. On the 4th of August, we packed up again and marched forward about one and a half miles to a camping ground which had been selected for us in a rather extensive grove of pines, near a small, dirty, sluggish little stream, called Great Run. Here we staked out a camp, cleared away the underbrush and leaves, lay out our company streets, and once more pitched our tents in regulation style. Then we took up again the routine duties of "soldier life in camp"—established a camp guard and *guard-house*, had squad or company drill in the forenoon, battalion or brigade drill in the afternoon and dress parade at sunset. This order of duties was of course frequently varied by a three days' tour on the picket line, and occasionally by an inspection or grand review.

In this camp near Sulphur Springs we passed six weeks very pleasantly. Nearly every day small squads of men were permitted to visit the springs, and drink of the nauseous water, which *may have had* a beneficial effect on the health of many of those who partook of it *unadulterated*. There was, it is true, an unusually large number in the regimental hospital, but not a death is recorded as having taken place in the regiment during our sojourn at that famous Southern watering place.

The warm days of August slipped quietly by without bringing to us any news, or even rumors of importance, so far as that portion of the army to which we belonged was concerned. But on the 10th day of September, General Meade, having learned that the bulk of Lee's army had fallen back from Culpepper,

pushed forward a heavy cavalry force and drove the balance across the Rapidan. As soon as this was accomplished our entire army was transferred to the region lying between the two rivers, and a strong picket line was established along the northern banks of the Rapidan, which became, instead of the Rappahannock, the line which separated the camping grounds of the two armies.

Our brigade broke camp near Sulphur Springs on the afternoon of the 15th, and moved leisurely forward about three miles. On the 16th we resumed the march at an early hour, waded the Rappahannock at Freedman's Ford, and the Hazel River, some two miles beyond; and then after a half hour's halt continued our march southward, and did not bivouac until two hours after sundown. On the 17th we advanced about three miles and pitched our tents within a mile of Culpepper. That night a rain storm set in, but about noon on the 18th it cleared again; and our new grounds having been pointed out to us, the men were set to work, and before the shades of night fell about us, we had a very respectable appearing camp again.

On the afternoon of the 21st, it was rumored that another general movement was contemplated. About midnight five days' rations were brought into camp, and an order was received which directed that they be distributed immediately. All hands were soon routed up, and when half an hour later we returned to our tents with well filled haversacks, all were agreed in the opinion that we were not to spend another night in that vicinity. But the next night found us in the same spot, and so did the second and third. The contemplated movement had either been abandoned, or postponed indefinitely, and we gradually slipped back into the old ruts of camp life.

Saturday, the 26th, our Paymaster made us one of his ever-welcome visits, and dealt out a considerable quantity of greenbacks.

About 2 P. M. on the 30th, our entire brigade assembled on an open field an eighth of a mile from our camp, to witness the execution of a most humiliating sentence, which had been justly pronounced by a military court on a deserter from our regiment—

one of that squad of base traitors whose names form the only foul blots to be found on the pages of the otherwise bright, and glorious record of the 124th New York Volunteers.

The brigade was drawn up in two parallel battle lines, which faced each other and were about eight feet apart. The culprit was brought to one end of the intervening space, where in the presence of over two thousand unwilling spectators the hair was clipped from one side of his head, and the buttons rudely torn from his coat. Then, preceded by a drum corps beating the rogue's march, and followed by a row of leveled bayonets carried so close to him that he was pricked by them at nearly every step, he was marched slowly down the line, until he had passed the regiment he had especially dishonored: when the drum corps moved rapidly from in front of him, and the provost-guard brought their pieces to a shoulder, and with hoots and bitter gibes, kicked him off the field. As the miserable wretch disappeared from our sight, and went, I know not where, the lines were broken and the regiments moved back to their respective camps; and not a few brave sons of Old Orange, were that day heard to groan out, while their faces flushed from shame, such expressions as "Death! death! ! yes, rather death a thousand times, than such disgrace."

On the second day of October, Colonel Cummins, having received a five days' leave of absence, took the evening train north. Sunday afternoon, October 4th, I caused the regiment to be assembled in a grove near our camp, and Chaplain Bradner preached to us a sermon which was well received and greatly appreciated by all. On the 5th our entire brigade, with the exception of General Ward and staff, myself, eight or ten line officers, and about three hundred enlisted men, left camp for a three days' tour on the picket line.

About nine o'clock on the evening of the 6th, I was handed a circular order from brigade headquarters, the body of which read, "You will cause every officer and man in your camp to assemble forthwith, in light marching order." While I was reading this order, one of General Ward's aids rode up and, after notifying me that all the troops of the brigade remaining in camp, were being

ordered to report to me on the color line of the 124th, said it was the general's order, that I should take command of them and as soon as they all arrived move to an open field about a quarter of a mile in front, and establish a picket line which would cover the camps of the second brigade. I was then informed that a large body of the enemy's cavalry had forced back a considerable portion of the Union line of mounted videttes and was reported to be threatening a dash on the third corps pickets at a point almost directly in front of our camp.

The detachments collected from the camps of the various regiments of the brigade were soon all on hand, and I moved out with them and formed an inner picket line as directed. Occasionally there came from the front the sound of a rifle shot or two, but nothing to indicate any considerable disturbance. After about an hour, during the greater part of which I remained mounted, there crept over me an almost irresistible desire to lie down, and I began to look about me for a suitable place; but the ground was so level that lie where I would, my head seemed to be lower than my shoulders. Then I tried to find something I could use as a pillow. I had neglected to bring a blanket and it would not do to take the saddle from my horse, for I might want to mount at any moment. Perhaps I could find a stone large enough for a head rest. But no, although stones were plenty, the largest to be found were no bigger than hens' eggs; and at last I filled a pocket handkerchief with these. But somehow it was not a success; either the pillow was too hard, or my head was too soft; and besides the ground was unusually damp. I finally concluded that the whole thing was a grand farce, and sent a lieutenant, who belonged to the 86th New York, back to General Ward with a request that I might be permitted to turn over my command to the senior officer under me and ride out to the front and learn if possible just what the real trouble was. The Lieutenant soon returned and stated that the General readily acceded to my request, and desired me to report to him in person when I returned.

I soon reached a road which ran past our camp and toward

the front, and galloping down it about a mile, came suddenly upon a frame farm house quite brilliantly lighted, and noticed floating from a staff which had been placed in the ground in front of one of the windows, a new brigade flag, and found myself at the headquarters of the chief officer of the picket line. Behind the house there was a grand reserve of at least six hundred men standing to arms. In the door yard there stood half a dozen orderlies each holding two or three horses.

I drew rein in front and looked toward the house a few moments and then dismounted, tied my horse to the fence—and requesting a guard who was pacing to and fro near by to watch him—walked to the open door and looked upon the scene within. The first thing that attracted my attention was the ticking of a telegraph machine, and I noticed that two wires ran out of one of the windows. The machine was on a table at the farther end of the room. At the side of the operator there sat a bran new brigadier—at all events he was dressed in a suit of new clothes, with wonderfully bright buttons and shoulder straps. There were gathered about the general, standing in very respectful attitudes, several staff officers, all with uncovered heads, cleanly shaved and untanned faces, and fresh uniforms. Had the little contraband Jack Smith been standing behind me, I should have expected to have heard him whisper, "Ox in the parlor."

Orderlies and aids were rushing in and out with orders to and from the front. The telegraph operator was kept busy dispatching messages repeated to him in an undertone. The coolness displayed by the General and his staff officers was evidently forced, and I was soon strongly impressed with the opinion that let the trouble at the front be what it might, there was somebody badly frightened at the headquarters of the officer in chief of the pickets. Presently I walked boldly into the room, saluted the general, stated that I had in obedience to orders, from General Ward of the 1st division of the Third corps, established an inner picket line that covered our camps, and had come out to learn just where that portion of the main line picketed by our division was located, and to hear if possible what had taken place in

its immediate front. He received me very kindly, and at once ordered one of his aids to accompany me. The aid in turn directed two orderlies to accompany him.

About a quarter of a mile beyond the house we were halted by a sharp "Halt! Who comes there?" The challenge came from a line of mounted men drawn across a road which was at that point shaded by large trees. Passing these horsemen we rode on through intense gloom, for about forty rods, when we came to the opposite edge of what proved to be a long strip of woods. Here we found the infantry pickets and learned that the line ran just in the edge of the woods. Turning to the right we rode along in rear of the pickets three or four hundred feet when we came to the first sentry post of our division. I now began to question each man as to what he had seen or heard. Very few of them had seen anything unusual, but that was not to be wondered at, for it was a very dark night. They had however all heard the tramp of a body of horses and several had fired in the direction the noise came from. Presently I came to a man of the 86th New York who told me the boys of the 124th joined their men only a few rods farther on. He, too, had heard the noise in front, and "blazed away" with the rest of the boys, but did not think the enemy had fired a shot in reply. We soon reached that portion of the line held by the Orange Blossoms, and the first man I came to was Mat. Crawley, of Company B. Now Mat. was a good-natured, truthful, but not over strong-minded son of Erin, who for a number of years before the war had been in the employ of my father; and as soon as I heard his voice, I resolved to question him closely. "Well Mat." I began, "what's the row—you don't pretend to think there are any 'Johnnie Rebs' in front of you, do you?" "Don't I then—well be gorry if you had been out here a little while ago, you wouldn't be after asking that question I'm thinking; and I just advise you not to be talkin' so loud agin if you don't want to hear a little whistling near your hat," whispered Mat. I then asked him if *he* had heard any bullets whistling past *his* head, and his reply was, "Why—why it's not mor'n a nour when they was trying to

break through our line right here, and we—and we peppered it into them so hard they had to give it up." "But did *you see them*, Mat?" I asked. "Now! now! be gorry," said Mat., "you don't believe there was any greybacks here a fightin' us a-tall a-tall." "There is where you are just right," I made answer. At which Mat raised his voice, and in a tone which told that he was not only angry, but that his feelings had been injured, replied, "Well then, Captain—Major I mean—I knowed you when you wus a wee boy, and if you don't believe Mat as never told your father a lie, all you have to do, is to get down from your horse—for I don't want to see you kilt entirely right fernenst my eyes—and walk right out there ten paces, be gorry, and you will find some of them shot to flinders right fernenst Mat Crawley, as never told your father a lie, be gorry." This was a challenge I felt bound to accept, and after notifying the videttes on both sides of us what I was going to do, I dismounted and walked out past Mat with considerable show of bravery, but not without some inward quaking, and strong misgivings that after all Mat's fright had not been causeless, and that perhaps an enemy had heard our conversation, and was, with a loaded rifle, listening and watching for my approach. I remember that though I started out briskly enough, my steps as I advanced grew shorter and shorter, and somehow I breathed wonderfully loud. Presently I heard a slight noise and saw a dark object moving just ahead of me. My first impulse was to rush back to the picket line. Then I crouched down and instinctively felt for my revolver, which I knew I had left in the holster on my saddle. I believed that what I had seen was a man rising partially and then throwing himself down again. Perhaps after all, it was a poor wounded fellow who had been deserted by his friends and would be glad to be found even by his enemies. And I held my own breath, and listened to hear him breathe; for a badly wounded man, if he does not groan, generally breathes audibly. But instead of a slight groan or loud breathing, I heard a scratching sound and soon felt myself growing brave again, for I was fast arriving at the conclusion that it was a wounded horse

instead of a man. Mat's story then was in the main correct. The foe had undoubtedly been there, but had certainly withdrawn to some other point. I asked in a suppressed tone, "Is there any wounded man about here." But no answer came to my inquiry. Then I moved cautiously around to the farther side of the wounded brute, and turning about so that I faced the Union line, took off my hat, and holding it lightly between my knees struck a lucifer match, and as the light flashed out I beheld lying in front of me a miserable hide-bare, glandered, dying mule.

Without a word of comment, I walked back to the line whistling,

"My Country! 'tis of thee
Sweet land of Liberty,"

monnted my horse and resumed my course along the line behind the videttes, receiving ever and anon, in answer to my inquiries the assurance that the only attack that had been made, was the one that had taken place at the point where the poor diseased mule had fallen. Nearly all, however, declared that they had heard distinctly, several times during the night, the distant tramp of a column of cavalry.

On reaching the right of the first division line, we moved back through the woods until we struck the open fields, where I bade my attendants good night; and as they returned to the grand reserve of the picket line, I made my way back to camp; and after reporting to General Ward the result of my visit, was permitted to withdraw the line I had posted. But before we reached our tents again the darkness of night was fleeing away before the rapid approach of morning.

When our regiment returned from the main picket line the boys reported that the morning after the scare a drove of about forty mules, all in the last stages of glanders, were wandering about in front of the lines. This little squad of dumb brutes, that had evidently been driven toward our lines in hope of spreading among the Union cavalry horses, the terrible disease of which they were dying, had caused twenty thousand troops a sleepless night.

On the 7th of October, Lieutenant Colonel Cummins returned to camp. On the morning of the 8th we were ordered to prepare for a march, and directed to fall in line without waiting for orders in case we heard heavy firing in direction of James City, a small village several miles to our right. The second division of our corps, it was said, had been ordered out in that direction. The Sixth corps had moved past our camp and marched to Ceder mountain on the 5th. The First corps was reported to be massed near Raccoon Ford; all of which indicated that a general advance was not only contemplated but had actually been commenced.

On the evening of the 8th, five days' rations were issued. About noon on the 10th, the thunder of artillery was heard from away off to our right, and our division was soon in line, and all ready to form column and move forward without one moment's delay. An hour later our brigade moved from the woods in which it had been encamped, and stacked arms in an open field. The sound of artillery continued to be heard at intervals, and several times during the afternoon we were called in line but did not move. As the sun sank out of sight there came an order to send the men to the woods for limbs and brush, and to build large fires. As soon as these were started we lay down beside them and tried to sleep.

The following graphic account of our march from Culpepper to Centreville, is from the pen of our chaplain, T. Scott Bradner, and was published in the Goshen Democrat of Oct. 29th, 1863.

"Last Saturday morning, (Oct 10th) we were at ease in camp, three miles west of Culpepper. Dr. Thompson and I had been to the town to get some sanitary stores. On going back at noon we found our camp all broken up, and hastily packed our personal baggage and with the corps took the road. About a mile south of Culpepper we halted in battle order, not knowing whether we were to be attacked there, go on to the Rapidan, or go back. Getting near dark, the air keen and cold, we began to make fires and get our supper, the horses saddled and packed, with the exception of blankets. Our prospect of a comfortable night was not flattering, for at 10 o'clock the order was brought

for every man to be wide awake and ready to start at a moment's notice. It seems, the reason for our halting was to give the ambulance and wagon trains time to get ahead of us, and at 8 o'clock on Sunday as the last one passed us we resumed our march. We now began to realize that we were putting back to Sulphur Springs and perhaps Washington, a terrible march for the poor men. Sixty rounds of cartridges, eight days' rations, with clothing and blankets, will give you some conception of what was to be borne in a rapid march. We came back on the same road we went down, until we were in sight of the estate of John Miner Botts, when we turned to the left, making for Freeman's Ford, eight miles below Sulphur Springs. . . At 3 P. M. we halted. We had heard artillery on our right and in direction of Culpepper during the forenoon, now it opened again on our right and not more than two miles from us. From the fast riding of orderlies and aids, I expected we were in for a fight. We moved on three-quarters of a mile and formed in line of battle. Being on high ground we had a view of some part of the action. . . . We could see the shells fly and our cavalry wheel on the plain and charge, but could not tell the result. After waiting an hour we took the road again and pushed on. It soon began to be whispered that Kilpatrick had whipped the Rebs, and driven them back to Culpepper. Night approaching we halted, stacked arms, and the men ran for rails and water, but the bugles then blew, "fall in," and now began a terrible march. Robbed of sleep the previous night, cold, hungry and tired, the night dark—in this condition we passed Hazel River, a branch of the Rappahannock about twelve rods wide. The pontoon bridge was taken up at 12 o'clock (midnight). The roads were good and dry and at 1 o'clock we saw ahead of us, hundreds of fires on the bluffs, and could hear the yells of a regiment at a time. We knew what *this* meant. It was our troops fording the Rappahannock, and it brought relief, for we felt an assurance that we could now rest. The river is neither deep nor wide; officers and men, started in with a yell, a laugh and a joke, then out, and through the camp fires, winding among the

hills for about a mile, when we halted for the night, made fires, had a cup of coffee, and at 2 o'clock laid down upon the ground to sleep. Monday morning we were started at daylight without time to make coffee; but only moved a short distance to a wooded hill, where we remained all day. In the afternoon heard artillery firing again near Brandy Station, which we afterwards learned was the Sixth corps driving one of Lee's back. That night the 124th and 86th, had to go on picket. The enemy's cavalry, artillery and infantry, it was said, were crossing up at Sulphur Springs and Fox's Ford—Kilpatrick being unable to hold them. I kept awake all night by walking. We were two miles out from the corps, the head of which passed us at daylight, Tuesday morning. The pickets were withdrawn and when our brigade came along we fell in with it. At 4 o'clock we were startled with the boom of cannon ahead of us and, as our brigade was second from the front, we could see the fire of our guns two fields beyond. The surgeons hastily turned aside in the woods, selected a place for a division hospital, and soon the wounded began to come in. We had from fifteen to twenty wounded, none killed; buried five rebels. A spent ball struck Captain Jackson on his sword plate, which doubled him up a little while, but he was not badly hurt. All the wounded were of the First Brigade. General French was riding some distance ahead of the column; one of his orderlies in advance, was fired on first when the General turned back and ordered the 10th Massachusetts Battery into position, stood by them, and ordered them not to fire until he gave the word. It was a force of dismounted cavalry; he waited till they neared the battery when at his order there was poured into the enemy a volley of grape and canister. Then the First Brigade charged and the Rebs took to their heels. The Second corps coming up to us, coolly turned into the woods and commenced getting supper, while we moved on with a line of flankers marching on our left through the fields. We staid at Greenwich all night and had hardly commenced moving on Wednesday morning the 14th, before heavy firing was heard in our rear, apparently just where the Second corps had staid all

night. We passed rapidly on over Bull Run at Blackburn's Ford, and halted at Centreville about 6 P. M. devoutly thankful to the Great Deliverer for his preserving care. We felt our fare to be sumptuous, although it was but boiled beans and pork. Centreville is a very high position. . . Prisoners say Lee's army is larger than ours, and that he is *bound* to have Washington this time. . . You may imagine what we have to guard when I tell you that thirty-one miles of wagon train were parked on Wednesday at Warrenton Junction."

On Thursday morning, the 15th, it became very evident that our army was as near Washington as General Meade intended it should go. At an early hour a defensive line for the entire army was selected and the troops began to move hither and thither, to the positions which had been assigned them. Our division moved about two miles to the left of where we had spent the night and encamped in line near Fairfax Station. During the day our old commander, General Sickles, paid us a visit and was received with shouts of welcome which must have convinced him that he was held in high regard by the officers and men who had fought under him at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Toward evening our division was called upon to witness the shooting of a deserter from the 5th Michigan—a scene so terrible that I will not attempt to describe it.

General Lee having signally failed in his grand turning movement, not disposed to make a direct assault on our unusually strong lines about Centreville, and finding his own position, so far from his base, becoming extremely hazardous, began on the 18th a retrograde movement. Meade of course started after him.

Early Monday morning, October 19th, our division struck tents and moved southward again, following in the wake of a portion of our cavalry corps which came up with and engaged the enemy's rear guard at Bristoe Station. But before we reached that point, which was fifteen miles from our starting place near Centreville, the affair was over and the enemy several miles away. We encamped that night within sight of the station.

On the 20th, we started forward with the rising of the sun.

but were detained several hours at the crossing of a stream called Broad Run, which flowed within a mile of where we had spent the night. After that we marched first one way, and then the other, passed over the battle field of the day before, saw a considerable number of dead horses and new made graves, and about 4 o'clock bivouacked one mile south of Greenwich.

On the 21st, we resumed the march at 8 A. M., and after moving at a rapid gait for ten miles found ourselves at Catlett's station, where we were halted, as we believed for dinner. But about 2 o'clock were conducted to a camping ground in an open field which sloped gently westward to a little stream, and ordered to pitch our tents in regular order. Meade had resolved to give over his pursuit of Lee, and encamp in that vicinity until he could rebuild some twenty miles of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, which Lee's army had destroyed; for it was over that road that our supplies were sent to us.

Picket duty grew unpopular with the approach of winter, and it was wonderful to what an extent our sick list would be suddenly lengthened on the slightest rumor that an order detailing the 124th for picket had reached camp. This was especially the case when the heavens indicated that a storm was brewing. The boys I have no doubt usually argued the matter with themselves in this wise "Well I—I really don't feel first rate, and if I am not actually sick now, ten to one I would be if I had to stand out in the cold or rain all night, and if I can fool the doctor and get excused, I'm going to do it." How often our *wise* Surgeon Thompson or little Doctor Montfort were actually fooled into believing a man was about to be stricken down with typhoid, small-pox or some other terrible malady before they became thoroughly acquainted with the wonderful and varied symptoms of that so hard to be treated disease called the "shirks," that at times raged to a fearful extent among a class of soldiers called "dead beats," I am not prepared to state. However, picket duty had to be performed summer and winter, night and day, rain or shine, and the 124th always did its full share of it, and did it well.

On the afternoon of the 25th of October, the regiment having just returned from a three days' tour on the outer lines, went to a neighboring wood for arms full of fresh pine *feathers* to replenish their beds, and made unusually extensive preparations for a comfortable night's rest; but soldiers above all others *never* know what an hour will bring forth. Just after dark that evening orders came to strike tents and get the regiment in line. When this was done we stacked arms, and after shivering about the stacks for an hour or more, formed line again and in obedience to orders from brigade head-quarters advanced about twenty rods, to a muddy flat where we were directed to form column by division and make ourselves *comfortable.*

It was one of those damp cold nights on which, let one do what he may standing or lying on the wet ground in the open air, he cannot keep his teeth from chattering or his limbs from shaking. Morning came at last. Many had walked about all night. Several officers of our brigade who happened to have some liquor with them had made themselves what is by some called "gloriously happy," and by others termed "*beastly drunk.*" The majority, however, had rolled themselves in their blankets and lain down at their posts, resolved to make the best of their situation. Very few of our number had closed their eyes in sleep and when reveille was sounded, all were tired and sore.

After breakfast we were directed to move back to our old grounds and put up our tents again. Why we had been ordered to pull them down, and leave our camp fires, and beds of boughs which were spread on a comparatively dry hillside, and move down to and spend the night on that cheerless, wet muddy flat, was a mystery not one of our number could solve, and I trust the good Lord turned a deaf ear to the curses which were pronounced against those who were supposed to have caused it.

At the first approach of darkness that evening all hands except a small camp guard—but three of whom were required to remain awake at a time—turned in; but our sleep was of short duration, for about 10 o'clock marching orders came, attention was sounded, and at 11 o'clock we were moving southward again.

We pushed on at a rapid gait until about 1 A. M. when we were ordered to halt, and permitted to build fires and lie down about them for the remainder of the night.

On the 27th we moved half a mile and encamped in an oak woods. We now learned that our division had come out as a sort of grand reserve to our picket line which had been advanced several miles, and was yet a quarter of a mile beyond us.

On the 30th, another advance of the pickets was made and our division moved on and encamped in the open fields near Bealton Station. There was no water within half a mile of where our regiment lay, and we had to go twice that distance for wood. We however remained there until the 7th of November, when the railroad having been put in running order again, a general advance was ordered.

CHAPTER XIII.

KELLY'S FORD—LOCUST GROVE—MINE RUN.

THE series of movements by which Lee forced Meade to fall back to Centreville, and then Meade compelled Lee to retire to the southern shore of the Rappahannock again, occupied the two armies for a period of between three and four weeks, and may be termed a campaign of skirmishes. Ten to fifteen rencounters between detached forces took place, but no engagement of sufficient magnitude or importance to be properly called a battle.

Greeley, in commenting on the affair in his "American Conflict," says, "Lee claims to have taken 2,000 prisoners during his dash across the Rappahannock; while our captures were hardly half so many. In killed and wounded the losses were nearly equal—not far from 500 on either side. But the prestige of skill and daring, of audacity and success, inured entirely to the Rebel commander, who, with an inferior force, had chased our army up to Washington, utterly destroyed its main artery of supply, capturing the larger number of prisoners, destroyed or caused us to destroy valuable stores, and then returned to his own side of the Rappahannock essentially unharmed; having decidedly the advantage in the only collision which marked his retreat. Nettled by the trick which had been played upon him, Meade now sought permission to make an attempt, by a rapid movement to the left, to seize the heights of Fredericksburg; but Hallock negatived the project."

Whatever Meade's previous desires or intentions may have been, it is certain that on the morning of the 7th of November his army moved forward in two columns; one of which—composed of the Fifth and Sixth corps, and commanded by the vet-

eran Sedgwick—took the roads leading toward Rappahannock Station; and the other, made up of the First, Second, and Third corps, under the immediate command of General French, pursuing a southeasterly course which led toward the fords several miles farther down the river.

The Third corps, commanded by General Birney, had the advance of French's column, and our division, again under General Ward, led the corps. We left Bealton about 8 A. M., moved slowly and cautiously for an hour or two, and then pushed rapidly forward, and at 2 P. M. the head of the column was halted under cover of a piece of woods that skirted the north-eastern bank of the Rappahannock, at Kelly's Ford.

As soon as General Ward's division was closed up, the 124th was ordered to support the 10th Massachusetts Battery, and moved with it to some high ground about thirty rods farther down the river, where the battery wheeled into position and unlimbered. From this commanding point we had an unobstructed view of the enemy's pickets whom we found, all unconscious of immediate danger, lounging about, and pacing to and fro along the opposite shore. They seemed greatly surprised at our sudden appearance. We had however hardly reached the position assigned us before their bullets began to whistle through the air. One of the gunners was wounded at the very outset, and before the horses could be got back out of range two of them were hit. The supporting force, of course, found it convenient to hug the ground, and no one complained of its being damp or cold. Some of our *best shots* crept out to the edge of the bluff, and with deliberate and effective aim opened a counter fire.

An open plain stretched back from the enemy's picket line, on the banks of the river, to a piece of woods about a quarter of a mile beyond. Presently a regiment of Confederates moving in column at a double-quick emerged from this woods, and our battery was immediately turned upon them. The two first shells passed over their heads but the third struck and exploded in the very centre of their column, literally tearing it in two. Their colors went

down, and where they had floated there first appeared a little cloud of smoke filled with dark flying spots, and then a huge gap was seen in their ranks. But almost immediately their flag reappeared and the gap was closed; then, quickening their pace to a run, the brave southerners hurried forward in an oblique direction across our front, to the support of the pickets and a regiment of comrades posted at the Ford. But they were too late to be of any avail; for in the meantime a powerful skirmish line composed of the United States Sharp-shooters and 20th Indiana of our brigade, supported by De Trobriand's five regiments (the 3d and 5th Michigan, 110th Pennsylvania, 40th New York, and 17th Maine) moving in battle line, had plunged into the stream, waded across under a galling fire, and with a determined charge carried the rifle pits on the southern shore, capturing the force posted behind them; and were now advancing across the plain against these new comers. As soon as the Confederate commander comprehended the situation of affairs at the ford, he halted his column and began to deploy in a battle line that faced his advancing foes; but in doing so exposed a flank to our guns which sent shell after shell raking down his half formed lines, and soon a deadly fire from our skirmishers struck them in front.—At this juncture a Confederate battery opened from a distant wood on De Trobriand's supporting line.—Faster, and yet faster, the shell hurled from our battery fell among them, and on, on, pushed our skirmishers—look! look! the Confederates are giving ground. Hear that charging shout from De Trobriand's men and see them run? What a line they keep. Good! good! there go the sharpshooters—they don't intend to let the third brigade run over them and get that Confederate flag.—"Give them two more shots, and then cease firing," shouts the commander of our battery, and lo! another shell explodes right among our brave foes, which seems to be *that last straw which breaks the camel's back*. They can endure no more. Their never completed, and now terribly shattered line breaks in fragments; and while the bulk of the survivors, officers and privates, flee every man for himself toward the woods from whence they came, many throw themselves on the

ground which is already thickly strewn with their dead and wounded comrades, and surrender to our skirmishers who are soon upon them; and Kelly's Ford is in undisputed possession of Ward's division, which soon collects in one body near the southern shore, the five hundred and odd prisoners it has captured.—The Union loss in this affair was less than fifty, all told.

"While the left column," says Swinton, (in his *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac,*) was thus passing at Kelly's Ford the right wing was forcing a crossing against more formidable obstacles. The Confederates occupied a series of works on the north bank of the river at Rappahannock Station, which had been built some time before by the Union troops, and consisted of a fort, two redoubts and several lines of rifle trenches. These works were held by two thousand men belonging to Early's division of Ewell's corps. Commanding positions to the rear of the fort having been gained, heavy batteries were planted thereon and a fierce cannonade opened between the opposing forces. Just before dark, a storming party was formed of Russell's and Upton's brigades of the Sixth corps, and the works were carried by a very brilliant *coup de main.* Over fifteen hundred prisoners, four guns, and eight standards were taken. Sedgwick's loss was about three hundred in killed and wounded."

As soon as Ward's division had established itself on the southern shore of the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford, there was thrown across the river a pontoon bridge, which, all night long weaved and creaked beneath the roll of the huge clattering wheels of battery after battery, and the "tramp—tramp—tramp" of an almost unbroken column of rapidly moving troops. Just after dark the guns which the 124th had been supporting were withdrawn, and the regiment passed over and bivouacked about half a mile beyond the Ford, near a little cluster of buildings called Kellysville.

About 8 o'clock next morning (Nov. 8) the advance was resumed. The Third corps marched first, with Ward's division in front. Our brigade led the division, and moved in battle line through the fields toward Brandy Station, with the 124th de-

ployed as flankers. About noon we were halted for dinner, after which the Third division (better-known to the men of the older regiments of the corps as "French's Pets") moved past and took the lead. During the forenoon our advance was uninterrupted —not a Confederate was seen or heard from; but as soon as the Third division moved to the front, a battery from a distant hill opened upon them, and bullets from unseen marksmen came whistling among them. The enemy's rear-guard retreated as the Union line slowly advanced. A brisk skirmish firing, emphasized occasionally by a *bang! bang!—bang! bang!* from their artillery, was kept up all the afternoon. At dusk the "halt" was sounded and we bivouacked in the woods at Brandy Station.

When we awoke Monday morning, November 9th, the heavens were dark and lowering, and the atmosphere was both damp and cold. About 5 P. M. we moved to another piece of woods, some two miles beyond the station, where on the morning of the 10th we selected camping grounds and were notified that we would be *allowed* to put up winter quarters. The brush was soon cleared away and the men set to work building log walls for their muslin shelters, but there were only three or four axes in each regiment, and as no more could be either drawn from the quartermasters or *borrowed* from the engineers or supply trains, the work progressed but slowly.

On the evening of the 14th, a storm set in with thunder and lightning, and rain fell in torrents all night. But about 9 A. M. on the 15th, the heavens cleared again, and just as the sun appeared there came from off to our right the roaring, rumbling sound of distant artillery; and all hands set to work picking up their traps, so as to be in readiness for prompt obedience to the order, "Fall in"; but fortunately it did not come. The cannonading continued about half an hour and then died away, and the boys resumed work on their log cabins, which were not yet completed.

On the 16th, there was a corps review, and on the 17th about half of our regiment moved out for a three days' picket tour on a portion of the line which ran very near the residence of the Hon.

John Miner Botts, some of whose lean chickens (for which the Government afterwards paid him a wonderful big price) I am afraid, strayed altogether too near one of our reserves, on which Captain Travis with Lieutenant Charley Stewart, and the bulk of Company "I" were posted. At all events when I rode past there on the morning of the 18th, several feathers blew in my face and I noticed a number of others floating through the air.

November 23d was a clear cold day and the boys kept rousing fires burning between the jambs of the new mud and wood chimneys of their log cabins, which were now about completed. At ten o'clock that evening marching orders reached us. About midnight a cold storm set in, but reveille was sounded from division and brigade headquarters at 4 A. M.; and at six o'clock the men were directed to remove the wet muslin shelters which formed the roofs of their cabins, strap them to their knapsacks, and remain in readiness to fall in at a moment's notice; but as soon as every thing had become soaking wet, and every body was shaking and shivering, and the rain had put out nearly all the fires, an order came stating that the contemplated movement had been postponed on account of the storm.

The 25th was a clear bright day, the usual drills were omitted, and the men were allowed to remain in camp and dry their blankets and clothes, and fit up their tents again. But on Thanksgiving morning (Nov. 26) the whole army was set in motion. Meade had resolved to move forward and offer battle to Lee, south of the Rapidan, before he permitted the army of the Potomac to settle down for the winter.

The First corps, followed by the Fifth, was ordered to march to the left and cross the river at Culpepper Mine Ford. The Second corps had the centre and was directed to pass over at Germania Ford. The Sixth corps was to follow the Third which was to move to the right and cross at Jacob's Ford.

Reveille sounded at daybreak and the "strike tents" an hour later. For once our division—which was again under the immediate command of Major General Birney—moved behind both the Second and Third divisions, and it was nine o'clock before

Ward's brigade was fairly under way. Once started we marched at quick time for over two hours without a halt; after that we moved *by jerks*, over a narrow road, cut through a dense forest. Just before dark we were ordered to file in among the trees, and eat our dinner; but the men had barely time to start fires, and boil and drink their coffee, before the "forward" was sounded again. About 10 o'clock that night our brigade reached and crossed the Rapidan at Jacob's Ford and bivouacked on the southern shore.

On the 27th we breakfasted before daylight, and at 7 A. M. the Third corps was off again; Birney's command was left at the rear of the column, and Ward's brigade was the last to move. The Third division had the advance, and about 6 o'clock ran into what proved to be, the picket line of Johnson's division of Ewell's corps. The leading Union brigade was soon deployed and a brisk skirmish fire was opened. The column quickened its pace, and as brigade after brigade came up, they were hurried to the right and left through the brush and trees; for we were again in the midst of one of those tangled forests which almost cover that vast weird region of Virginia, known as the Wilderness. As the line lengthened, the firing increased. Presently every brigade of the Third corps except ours had been thrown in, and General Ward, in obedience to orders, formed his command in column of regiments, and moved up to within thirty rods of the centre of the main line, and held himself in readiness to hasten to any point where assistance was needed. We soon threw ourselves on the ground and lay there undisturbed listeners to what was going on about us. At first we heard only brisk skirmish firing, but it spread and spread, until it seemed to come from all around us—front, flanks and rear. Presently we heard the sound of bugles and the shouts of officers; then came the thunder of volley after volley of riflery, followed by the booming of artillery.

Hour after hour the din of battle continued; but our brigade remained inactive until about 3 P. M., when the enemy was discovered to be massing in front of one of our batteries, which was posted on an advanced, but commanding and important position,

in front of a gap in the right wing of our main line, and General Ward was directed to hasten thither and support it. We had just taken position behind these guns when the enemy made a most furious charge, driving back the Union line on both sides of us; but our battery was handled in a masterly manner—its rapid discharges of grape told with fearful effect on that portion of the enemy's charging line in our immediate front, which soon broke and fled; and then, as the detached wings halted and began to waver, the Union troops who had been giving ground took courage and with a shout started forward on a counter-charge, and all that portion of the Confederate line in front of the Union right, fell back a considerable distance and took shelter behind a line of rifle pits, whither General French did not care to follow.

After that for over an hour, we heard only an occasional artillery shot off to the right, and fitful skirmish firing along our front. But just as the sun went down the battle opened again and the crash of musketry, and thunder of artillery from either side of us soon became most terrific. Again I threw myself on the ground and listened; endeavored to discover by the sound which way the tide of battle flowed, wondered who would rest as temporary victors on the field of that day's conflict, and what the morrow had in store for us; for I was assured that only the Third corps was engaged on the Union side at that point, and regarded the fighting thus far, as but the prelude to another Chancellorsville or Gettysburg.

Presently one of Birney's aids dashed up from the left shouting "A portion of the 1st brigade has been forced back, and the General wishes you to send your two best regiments to fill the gap." "Take the 124th and 86th New York," promptly replied General Ward, and before the words had barely escaped his lips we had filed from the column, and were hastening forward at a double-quick, to re-occupy a position from which the 17th Maine—one of the largest and best regiments in the army—had just been driven. We had been lying in an open field. It was almost dark, and as this staff officer, galloping ahead of us, led the way

into a dense piece of woods, the gloom became most intense; but guided by the powder flashes, which marked the Union line of battle on either side of the black space we were directed to occupy, we groped our way to a point from which we could look through the opening and see the fire darting from the guns of a Confederate battery directly in front of it, and hear the shells they were hurling forth go tearing and crashing through the trees just ahead of us; yet without a moment's delay we crept on, and soon became convinced that we were in more immediate danger from falling limbs, and flying splinters of wood, than from iron shell; for the southern artillerymen had apparently lost the range and seemed to be firing at the tops of the trees. The 124th was in advance and soon reached and connected with the troops on the right of the gap, and after some little difficulty and confusion occasioned by stumbling over several dead bodies and stepping on two or three wounded men, for the ground was thickly strewn with both, we re-occupied the right half of the space which had been vacated by the 17th; then the 86th moved up and formed on our left, and the Union line was again intact.

For a few moments all went well; then we heard a rustling sound in front of us which instantly explained why the missiles from that battery were aimed so high; and we opened fire on our unseen foes, by sending such a volley down through the woods, as not only brought that advancing line to the ground, but drove the artillerymen from their guns. A moment later it seemed as if a swarm of huge fire-flies were rising from the earth about a hundred yards in front of us, and the air about us was suddenly filled with hissing sounds. Our men either sprang behind the trees, or threw themselves on the ground, but kept on firing as rapidly as they could. Presently the flashes from the enemy's rifles began to recede, and a few moments later that battery opened again, and three or four shells went screeching through the air just above our heads. Those who were lying down hugged the ground closer than ever, but the very first shell struck and burst right in front of the 86th, killing two of their brave boys, and wounding several others. We soon drove the artillery-

men from their guns again and endeavored, by concentrating the fire of a portion of our line in that direction, to keep them away; but ever and anon, our men—who had nothing to guide their aim except the recollection of where the flash from the guns had been—would lose the range and the rebel gunners would spring to their pieces and hurl two or three shells among us. The most of these passed through or over the 86th, but occasionally one would explode above the 124th. The roar of riflery was incessant. This firing at one another in the dark lasted until about 9 o'clock, when all the noises of battle ceased, and the remaining hours of the night wore quietly away. Early the next morning we sent out skirmishers, but the enemy was not to be found, and before daybreak we were moving forward again. It soon commenced raining and the roads became very *heavy;* but we plodded on, without overtaking the enemy, until about 4 P. M. when, wet, tired and hungry, we halted for the night. An hour later the majority of our men were rolled in their blankets fast asleep.

The losses of the 86th, in this affair were very severe—viz. four killed and thirty-two wounded—while ours, though the two regiments fought as usual side by side, were comparatively light. Several of our number were quite badly bruised by falling limbs and flying splinters, beyond which the following is a complete list of

CASUALTIES OF 124TH AT LOCUST GROVE, NOV. 27, 1863.

Private Thomas M. Brooks,	Co. C	Wounded	Mortally.
" Jacob F. Jordan,	" H	"	Severely.
Corporal Theron Bodine,	" H	"	"
Private Daniel Rider,	" G	"	slightly.
" Cyrenius Giles,	" G	"	"
" J. S. Crawford,	" F	"	"
" Oliver Miller,	" G	Killed or	Captured.
Corporal John J. Taylor,	" G		Captured.
Private John B. Weymer,	" D		"

We were under way at an early hour on the morning of the 29th, but had not advanced more than two miles when we came upon the enemy in battle array, and evidently prepared to give

us a warm reception. One who made a critical examination of the enemy's position thus describes it:

"The Confederate line was drawn along a prominent ridge or series of heights, extending north and south for six or eight miles. This series of hills formed all the angles of a complete fortification, and comprised the essential elements of a fortress. The centre of the line presented four or five well defined facings of unequal length, occupying a space of more than three thousand yards, with such angles of defence that the fire of the enemy was able to enfilade every avenue of approach, while his right and left flanks were not less strongly protected. Stretching immediately in the rear and on the flanks of this position was a dense forest of heavy timber, while some twelve hundred yards in front was Mine Run—a stream of no great width, but difficult for infantry to cross, from the marshy ground and dense undergrowth of stunted timber with which it was frequently flanked on either side, as well as from the abrupt nature of its banks. In addition to these natural defences, the enemy quickly felled in front of a large extent of his position a thick growth of pine as an abatis, and hastily constructed trenches and breastworks for infantry. The position was, in fact, exceedingly formidable."

It was the Sabbath-day, and nearly 9 A. M., when we suddenly emerged from a piece of woods through which we had been marching, and were halted on the open fields about a thousand yards east of Mine Run. For half an hour we stood there gazing off across the valley through which the stream ran, on the frowning heights beyond, and sweeping with our field glasses the long line of earth-works which crowned them. Then we moved a few rods to the right, filed into a piece of heavy timber and stacked arms.

At 10 o'clock some of the boys declared they could hear the distant tolling of a church bell, and about the same time orders reached us from corps headquarters, to hold ourselves in readiness to form line of battle and move against the enemy's works. Then, suddenly, there settled down upon all a cloud of gloom; and a marked dread of what was to come, hitherto unknown in

the 124th, seemed to take possession of every officer and man in our brigade. Laughing and even social conversation entirely ceased and the men sat and lay around under the trees in silent serious meditation. Presently prayer meetings were started here and there in all the regiments, and brave earnest prayers could be heard, ascending from every direction to the God of battles—not so much for the protection and preservation of the gallant men there assembled as for the welfare of loved wives and dear little ones, who might ere another sun should set, be added to the already vast host of mourners scattered all over the land, and most generally known as—shall I say, "The honored wards of a grateful country," or simply, "Dead soldiers' wives and children?"

About noon it was rumored that our entire army was to move simultaneously against the enemy's works, and that a signal for starting would be given between the hours of 1 and 3 P. M. As one after another walked to the edge of the woods and looked off at the frowning heights covered with massive earth-works which completely concealed the foe from their view, many a brave, intelligent face turned pale; but when at 2 P. M. the orders to "fall in" and "take arms," were given, the Sons of Orange County sprang to their places, and there was a man for every rifle; and as the "forward" was uttered there was something in the precise, resolute movement of our line which said to me plainer than it could have been expressed by words, "Let come what may, you will have no occasion to blush because of the conduct of any member of the 124th to-day."

After advancing about thirty rods, we were halted and ordered to stack arms again. The afternoon wore slowly away. The anticipated orders to move in force against the enemy's works were not issued and at night we lay down to sleep in the same piece of woods where we had spent the day. But about 2 o'clock Monday morning, the 124th and two or three other regiments of our brigade were aroused and ordered to the front, to relieve a line of pickets which had during the early hours of the night been pushed up to within 250 yards of the Confederate works.

We soon reached the run and crossed over without getting very wet, but many of the boys sank almost to their knees in the marshy ground beyond; yet we pushed on, and at 3 o'clock reached the pickets we were sent to relieve, and lay down on the frozen ground they vacated.

As morning dawned we could see the muzzles of guns protruding through embrazures in, and men's heads moving to and fro behind, the earth-works in front and above us. About 7 A. M. long Union battle lines began advancing over the cleared fields through the valley below and behind us; and a little later we received orders to bring up our reserves, form a skirmish line, and advance. Again men's faces grew pale, but no one faltered. Colonel Cummins directed me to take charge of the left wing that he might confine his attention to the five right companies, and shouting the order, "forward men, forward," hurried off to the right while I hastened toward the left centre.

As the men sprang to their feet and began to advance, the enemy opened a most furious cannonade. Their works seemed covered with artillery. As I moved past Company H, private Charley McGregor, of that company, was hit in the hip with a piece of shell and sprang several feet in the air, uttering as he did so a piercing, terrible screech, and fell to the ground almost across my path. Lieutenant Ramsdell was about the same time hit by a bullet from a sharp-shooter's rifle, and it was supposed mortally wounded; but fortunately—as was the case with Captain Jackson on the retreat to Centreville a few weeks before—his sword plate was just in the right spot, and (although he suffered severely afterward) he was soon on his feet again. The Confederate infantry were reserving their bullets until we should get a little nearer, and their batteries were evidently firing at the battle line behind us, but the shell and shot passed so near our heads as to hurl several of our number to the ground. Once I thought the top of my own head was gone; but, perhaps, I dodged just in time to save it; at all events, when I put my hand up I found that my hat was gone; but whether it was the sudden rising of my hair, or the near approach of that cannon ball

that caused it to fall off (for there were no holes in it when I picked it up) I am unable to state positively.

We had not advanced more than fifty yards when an order to halt reached us, and we threw ourselves on the ground again. A few moments later, we were directed to retire to the point we had started from. The orders to assault the enemy's formidable works had been countermanded, and about 9 A. M., our skirmish line fell back to within a hundred yards of Mine Run; where we formed picket line again, posted our reserves in a piece of woods, and remained until evening.

About noon, the grass on the hill side took fire some four hundred yards in front of us, and at a point near where McGregor had been carried and left for dead, and one of the videttes came in and reported that they could hear a voice, which sounded like Charley's, crying for some one to come and carry him off before the fire reached him. Volunteers were instantly called for to go out and bring in the poor fellow, no matter who he was. It was a hazardous undertaking, for the enemy's sharp-shooters would undoubtedly fire on anybody who should attempt to ascend the hill again; but Corporal Duncan W. Boyd, of Company C, and two or three other big-hearted brave fellows whose names I am unable to recall, announced themselves as willing to hazard their lives at any time in efforts to prevent a wounded soldier's burning to death, let him be a friend or a foe. The enemy did fire on them, but they presently returned unscathed, carrying McGregor in a blanket. The poor fellow had recovered consciousness some time before, and had lain there too weak from loss of blood to move a foot, and watched the fire creep toward him until, when succor came, it was not more than ten feet away. His shattered limb was amputated that night, but he died the next morning.

About 7 o'clock Monday evening, our regiment was relieved by a battalion of Vermont troops from the First corps, and we moved about an eighth of a mile farther to the left, where we were posted as a grand reserve in rear of Berdan's two regiments of sharp-shooters which remained on the outer line.

General Meade, it would seem, either never really intended making a direct assault on the enemy's works, as his Sunday's order indicated, or else becoming aware of the hopelessness of the undertaking the moment the enemy's strength was developed, he had wisely decided to abandon it. As soon as darkness set in, Tuesday evening, our army began a retrograde movement, and at day-break Thursday morning, December 3d, after an all night's march through the mud, the 124th shouting, "Thank the Lord," unslung their knapsacks, among the roofless log huts of their "Old camp ground" near Brandy Station.

The weather during the last 24 hours of our stay at Mine Run was so extremely cold that "Many of the men who were on the picket line that day and the night before, were found, when the relief came round, dead at their posts, frozen." *

On Monday afternoon, Major Generals French and Warren met, just in front of the picket reserve, where the left wing of the 124th was lying, and interchanged views regarding the situation. I did not catch the drift of the conversation, but presently in reply to a remark of General Warren's, French turned his face toward the enemy's works, raised in his stirrups, and with his eyes blinking more rapidly than usual, replied "Thunder! Warren, it would be throwing your *purse* before swine," at which they wheeled their horses and rode off in opposite directions. Quite a number of our men had been entirely out of rations since the night before, and just after French and Warren had separated a rather fine looking steer came running through the woods and halted in the very spot on which the Generals had met; but in less than half an hour his flesh, cut in several hundred strips and fastened to as many forked sticks, was broiling in front of little brush fires which had been suddenly started up all through the woods. About the same time several rubber blankets, full of flour, appeared from, nobody seemed to know where, and the boys had a right hearty meal.

When Meade finally decided to return to his old camps north of the Rapidan, the Third corps was directed to move down the

* See Dr. Geo. T. Stephens' *Three years in the Sixth Corps*, page 299.

Orange Turnpike about five miles, and then take a road which turned to the left and ran for about six miles through dense forests and struck the Rapidan at Culpepper Mine Ford, where we would find a pontoon bridge lain ready for us to cross on. It was nearly daylight when we reached this bridge, and as soon as the rear regiment of our column—which had for several miles been hard pressed by a body of Confederate cavalry—crossed over, a band at the Ford struck up, "Out of the Wilderness," and there went up a responsive "Amen!" which would have done credit to the brethren at an Ocean Grove Camp Meeting.

CASUALTIES OF 124TH AT MINE RUN, NOV. 30, 1863.

Private	Charles A. McGregor,	Co. H	Killed.
"	Jacob F. Jordan,	" H	Wounded.
"	John Edwards,	" D	"
"	Francis McMahon,	" G	"

CHAPTER XIV.

FIVE MONTHS AT BRANDY STATION AND CULPEPPER.

FROM the close of the short and unfruitful Mine Run campaign, which ended on the first days of December, 1863, until the opening of the long and bloody Wilderness campaign, which began on the first days of May, 1864, the two grand armies contented themselves with frowning at each other from the opposite banks of the Rapidan, making three or four weak feints, and preparing for the stern work which followed.

The 124th, on its return to Brandy Station, settled down in the camp it had vacated a week before, and after a few days had been spent in repairing and fitting up the log cabins in which we now expected to spend the winter, we took up again the routine duties of camp life, and barring the unusual number of bitter cold days spent on the picket line, the winter passed more pleasantly than we had any reason to expect it would.

The verbatim extracts from diaries kept during the period referred to, by members of the regiment other than myself, of which this short chapter is in part made up, will, I have no doubt, give my readers a more correct idea of some of the phases of soldier life when the army is *resting*, than I could in any other way convey to them. Lieutenant Charles Stewart's diary for the month of December, 1863, contains the following.

"*Thursday, Dec. 3d*—Reached our old camp at daybreak, foot-sore and tired out. Went to bed early, but about 9 o'clock the bugle sounded "strike tents" and we had to get up and tear down our houses. After forming on the color line and waiting there an hour, the order was countermanded and we lay down again but without fixing up tents.

"*Friday, Dec. 4th*—Still *played out*, sore from head to foot,

The regiment was formed at noon to witness the execution of Private ——— ——— of Company B, sentenced to be shot for desertion.* After dress parade we stretched our tents over the roof poles of our log cabins again, and with a good fire, spent a comfortable evening.

"*Saturday, Dec. 5th*—Had one good night's rest in our comfortable house, but about 1 P. M. that confounded strike tents sounded again. The brigade was got together in an adjacent field where we stacked arms and rested for two hours; after which each regiment formed on its own color line, stacked arms there and kept themselves in readiness to fall in at a moment's notice till 8 o'clock, when the order came to unpack knapsacks and make ourselves comfortable for the night. The night was bitter cold and as we had no tents up we *could not be* comfortable.

"*Sunday, Dec. 6th*—Passed a very disagreeable night on account of the cold—was glad when daylight came. After breakfast the wind rose and our fire smoked so that we had to let it go out. Charley Thayer took dinner with us. Had letters from home in the evening, and a notice that I had to go on brigade guard in the morning.

"*Thursday, Dec. 10th*—No drills to-day to disturb the plans of any body. The weather is fine and the boys are busy fixing up their winter quarters. We have made some improvements on ours to-day. It is reported that General Thomas has succeeded Meade and is now in command of this army. All hands are keeping a sharp lookout for the paymaster.

"*Friday, Dec. 11th*—An order was read at dress parade stating that furloughs would now be granted to a limited number of officers and enlisted men. Only three line officers and five enlisted men allowed to be absent from our regiment at a time. Half of this company (I) sent in applications during the evening.

"*Monday, Dec. 14th*—Ramsdell received his discharge and left us this morning, and Lieutenant Sayer was assigned to the command of his company (C). Colonel Cummins and Captains

* Execution did not take place—sentence commuted by President, to confinement at Fort Jefferson, Florida.

Benedict and Jackson, got furloughs and left for home on the 6 P. M. train. Boys spent the greater part of the day cleaning up camp. Weather blustery with showers.

"*Tuesday, Dec.* 15*th*—Beautiful spring-like weather—cleaning camp is still the order of the day—Hear that the paymaster has arrived and will commence with the 4th Maine in the morning. We have our pay rolls signed and every body is ready to receive his greenbacks. Sergeant Chandler and four others have received furloughs and will start for home in the morning.

"*Thursday, Dec.* 17*th*—Last night was very stormy—this morning no better. Our house leaks all over, and our chimney works badly, which makes things rather uncomfortable.

"*Friday, Dec.* 18*th*—Paymaster has been shelling out greenbacks to us nearly all day—Dr. Montfort received a special leave of absence.

"*Saturday, Dec.* 19*th*—Very cold and wintry—strong wind and heavy frost. The regiment ordered out for inspection at 1 P. M. This was a cold job, but did not last long.

"*Sunday Dec.* 20*th*—No duty of any kind to-day but dress parade in the afternoon. Still very cold.

"*Monday, Dec.* 21*st*—One hundred and fifty men detached from our regiment for picket. Captain Travis to act as field officer of the day. I remained in camp but have been detailed to go on guard in the morning.

"*Wednesday, Dec.* 23*d*—Received a box from home to-day, with a good assortment of delicacies to pass the Christmas with."

"*Friday, Dec.* 25*th*—Spent a pretty good Christmas. The Colonel and Captains Benedict and Jackson, returned from furlough—a whiskey ration was issued to the regiment and a number of the boys feel good.

"*Saturday, Dec.* 26*th*—Very dull in camp to-day. Quite a number are keeping very quiet and trying to sleep off the effect of yesterday.

"*Sunday, Dec.* 27*th*—The same old camp Sabbath—no inspection—no drill—no work, but in other respects the same as other days.

"*Monday, Dec. 28th*—Wet and disagreeable. Have to hug the fire very close to keep at all comfortable.

"*Wednesday, Dec. 30th*—Major Weygant, with Captains Travis and Wood, Adjutant Van Houten and Chaplain Bradner, received furloughs and started for home on the 10 o'clock train this morning.

"*Thursday, Dec. 31st*—Very wet and stormy, in consequence of which we were mustered by companies in front of the Colonel's tent. After retiring I was hauled out of my bed by Quartermaster Post who made me go to his tent, where was a party waiting to see the old year out and the new year in."

The morning report of the 124th, for Dec. 30th, 1863, shows the strength of the regiment as follows:

Present for duty		22	officers and	261	enlisted men.	
" on extra duty		"	"	8	"	"
" sick	2	"	"	7	"	"
" in arrest		"	"	1	"	"
Absent on detached service	3	"	"	35	"	"
" with leave	1	"	"	8	"	"
" sick and wounded	1	"	"	189	"	"
" without leave		"	"	1	"	"
" in arrest		"	"	2	"	"
Total present and absent	29	"	"	512	"	"

The diary of Sergeant Thomas Taft, of Company C, for the month of January, and first half of February, 1864, contains the following:

"*Friday, Jan. 1st*, 1864—It ceased raining about 8 A. M., cleared off very cold—freezing fast. Had pudding for our New Years dinner—ingredients, flour, dried apples and molasses.

"*Saturday, Jan. 2d*—Coldest night we have had this year—made ice thick enough to bear a man's weight. The regiment started for picket line under command of Captain Jackson at 9 o'clock this morning. The picket line is five miles from camp; the roads are rough and very rutty, and it took us until 12 o'clock to get there. I go on post near Mrs. Pendleton's house, which is two miles northwest of Culpepper Court-house.

"*Sunday, Jan. 3d*—Very cold, commenced snowing at 4 P. M.

"*Monday, Jan. 4th*—Went back to the grand reserve last

evening, and came out to the old post again this morning and remained all day. It snowed all last night and there were two inches of snow on the ground this morning. The commissary sergeant brought us our two days' rations of soft bread, sugar coffee and fresh meat. We captured a contraband trying to run the picket line. He says we can do anything we have a mind to with him, if we will only let him live. The poor "dark" has evidently been taught to believe that we are all cannibals.

"*Tuesday, Jan. 5th*—Cold as ever. Relieved at 12 o'clock by the 86th New York, and a detachment from the sharp-shooters. The march back to camp over the frozen ground was very severe and about used me up. It snowed some this afternoon.

"*Wednesday, Jan. 6th*—Very cold. Ground still covered with snow. We have to carry our firewood about a mile. Have been busy all day writing up company books. The sun came out at 11 o'clock, but it did not thaw much and at 4 P. M. began to grow cold again.

"*Friday, Jan. 8th*—Snow four inches deep and yet falling. A funeral in the 4th Maine—'died of fever.'

"*Saturday, Jan. 9th*—Wash day. Got clothes all washed by 12 o'clock. Our division has been ordered to change camp. Drew three days' rations of salt pork and fresh beef, coffee and sugar. Expect to start for our new camp in a day or two.

"*Sunday, Jan. 10th*—Company inspection by Lieutenant Sayer. Dress parade by Major Weygant, who with Captains Wood and Travis, and Lieutenant Van Houten, returned from furlough last night.

"*Monday, Jan. 11th*—Very cold night. Bugle blew for roll call at 4 A. M. One hundred and twenty-five men detailed from our regiment for picket. They started for the picket line at 7 o'clock. Have been busy all day making out our company ordnance returns, for Lieutenant Sayer—or rather Captain Sayer, for he was mustered to that grade this afternoon. Moving camp has been postponed until Friday, when we are to go two miles out, near Culpepper, where wood is plenty.

"*Friday, Jan.* 15*th*—Commenced moving camp yesterday morning. Officers' traps and baggage were taken over first, and then the wagons came for ours. I got some of my tent logs carried over and have cut and split enough more to make our tent seven logs high.

"*Saturday, Jan.* 16*th*—Got to work on our tents at daylight, up to our eyes in mud and dirt. Got our tent nearly all plastered and chimney nearly completed. Our camp is situated on a hill—well wooded. Any quantity of oak and hickory close at hand.

"*Sunday, Jan.* 17*th*—We put up bunks in our tent to-day. The ground was very damp to sleep on. The snow is about all gone. Received orders from adjutant to send in names of all men in company who have not been vaccinated.

"*Saturday, Jan.* 23*d*—Two hundred men from our regiment went out on picket this morning under command of Captain Silliman, who returned from Riker's Island and resumed command of our company on the 29th.

"*Monday, Jan.* 25*th*—A lady rode past our camp to-day, all the boys turned out to see her.

"*Tuesday, Jan.* 26*th*—Picket detail returned to-day. Received our new flag. Had dress parade at 3 o'clock—both colors out, the old and new, side by side. We saluted them, and then gave three cheers, first for the old and then for the new. *

* The following communication from the donors was read to the regiment and received with vociferous applause.

To the Officers and men of the 124*th Regiment N. Y. Vols.*—The Daughters of Orange, having heard that the colors they presented to you at the time of your organization have been impaired in battle, take great pleasure in substituting new ones. Please regard them as renewed tokens of their high appreciation of your services as a regiment, and as a pledge of their desire to have their interests in this contest identified with your own. You can hardly be expected to know how large a place you have in our hearts, how sincere our regard and sympathy, or the great interest we have in the records of the brave American Guards. Continue to keep them unsullied and to make for us such a history as we may be proud to deposit with the archives of our country. You have already *won a name* for courage and efficiency in battles, for fortitude and endurance in wearisome marches—a name that can be still more exalted, if, after having stood the test of intrepid soldiers, you can add to it the crowning virtues of patience and endurance to the end.—Your diminished numbers tell eloquently what you have already suffered since you left us under the leadership of the

"*Wednesday, Feb.* 3*d*—An order was read at dress parade stating that until further orders on the subject we are to have company drill in the morning, battalion drill in the afternoon, and brigade drill once a week. Captain Silliman received his commission this morning as Colonel of the 26th U. S. Colored Regiment.

"*Thursday, Feb.* 4*th*—Captain Silliman gave the officers of the regiment a farewell supper. They all assembled in Captain Jackson's tent at 8 P. M. and had a jovial time, I should judge, from the noise they made.

"*Friday, Feb.* 5*th*—The Captain requested me to form company without arms this morning, and when I had done so he made us a short address, and shook hands and bid us good-bye; as he moved away we gave three hearty cheers for Colonel Silliman."

Toward the close of January, General Butler—then commanding the Department of Virginia and North Carolina—having learned that Richmond had been stripped of its garrison for the purpose of reinforcing General Picket's command, which was operating in North Carolina, decided to attempt to capture the Confederate Capital by making a sudden dash on it by way of New Kent Court-house, with a strong column of cavalry.

On the 4th of Febauary, General Butler's raiding column, under the immediate command of Brigadier General Wister, reached New Kent Court-house, and General Sedgwick who was in temporary command of the Army of the Potomac, was instructed

able and bold Colonel Ellis. Send us back the old and revered flag that it may be placed with the cherished mementoes of your lamented commander and his immortal braves. Its tarnished hues will affect to sadness, those who beheld it unfurled and in his hand held aloft on the day of its presentation, when he declared if he did not bring it back we might rest assured that the arm that held it, would be palsied in death. Return it to tell us of Gettysburg, and of the faithful, undaunted men, who followed it with the offerings of their lives, amid the strife and carnage of battle; or beneath its folds have shouted victory over our foes. We will continue to hold in grateful remembrance not only the dead, but the disabled and scarred survivors. Be assured that you, upon whom rests the future, have no public friends more anxious for your unblemished reputation and honor, or more deeply solicitous for your welfare than the

DAUGHTERS OF ORANGE.

by the authorities at Washington, as a diversion in favor of Butler's enterprise, to make a demonstration across the Rapidan.

The bulk of our cavalry and the Third corps were selected for this purpose. During the night of the 5th the cavalry moved forward and on the morning of the 6th the Third corps started after them.

Reveille was sounded in our brigade at half past four o'clock and at seven we were ready to start; but about 8 o'clock it commenced raining and we did not leave camp until 3 P. M. Then we moved through the rain and mud to an open field about a mile away, where the division was ordered to assemble, and stacked arms. After remaining there about half an hour, during which we heard heavy artillery firing from the direction of the Rapidan, we started forward and after marching about five miles bivouacked for the night without partaking of a warm cup of coffee, for we were unable to find wood to build fires with. The blankets and clothes of the boys were so wet they could not sleep, and all felt relieved when at 4 o'clock Sunday morning the buglers sounded reveille again. It had stormed hard all night and the rain was yet falling, but at daybreak we started forward again. The mud was so deep we could scarcely wade through it, and when at mid-day we halted for dinner, we had made but four miles. Our cavalry and a force of the enemy which was opposing their advance, kept up a terrible racket, with both artillery and small arms, until about 1 P. M. when the din of the battle died away. At 2 o'clock we countermarched and moved back about a mile to a piece of woods. The rain meantime ceased falling, and the sun came out bright and warm. As soon as we reached the woods the men unrolled their blankets and spread them on the ground and branches of trees to dry, and began cutting pine boughs to sleep on, for we all expected to spend the night there. But about 4 P. M. orders came to move back to camp. Then hour after hour, we plodded on through mud almost knee deep, and just after midnight reached our tents again, all covered with dirt and completely worn out; yet at early daylight next morning more than half the regiment had to start off on a five

mile march, through the mud again, to the picket lines. I rode out with the poor fellows as, "Brigade officer of the pickets," and will copy a note or two from my diary concerning that tour of duty.

"*Wednesday, Feb.* 10*th*—The dividing of the reserve into reliefs last night, so that a part might sleep while the balance remained ready for duty, was a useless task, for it was so damp and cold that *no one* was able to sleep.

"*Thursday, Feb.* 11*th*—I lay down quite early under my little tent at the picket reserve last evening, but the cold was so intense I could not sleep, and soon got up and spent the night sitting on a cracker box by a smoking log fire, around which I kept moving, first one way and then the other, to keep out of range of the strong pine smoke which almost eats one's eyes out."

This was my last *three days* picket tour. On the 17th of February Lieutenant Colonel Cummins became full Colonel, and I was mustered as Lieutenant Colonel—having held a commission of that grade since Oct. 10th, 1863—and my name was thereupon transferred from the roll of picket officers, to that from which division officers of the day were drawn. My first detail for duty in the latter capacity was received on the morning of February 23d, when, on proceeding to the picket line, I relieved Colonel Moses Lakeman of the 3d Maine, and was in turn relieved the next day by Lieutenant Colonel Walker of the 17th Maine.

The headquarters of our division officers of the picket was, at that time, at what was known as the Thomas House. Mr. Thomas was an old man, unfit for military service, and though at heart a secessionist, was nevertheless a courteous gentleman. His wife was a delicate, proud-looking old lady, but like her husband was respectful and accommodating. These old people having been deprived of other means of support, were glad to have served up in their house, to the officers of the day and the staff officers who frequently accompanied them, such articles of food as Mr. Thomas was able to procure from our commissaries and sutlers, and from the officers themselves—for which, of course, he

was always paid most liberally. The Thomases had two sons and several sons in law, but they were all in the Rebel army and their wives remained within the Confederate lines. There was, however, living with the old people at the time, a distant relative of the family who before the war had been a school-mistress. She was a bitter little Rebel, not more than twenty years of age, and I had frequently heard Colonels Lakeman and Cummins speak of her as "Jennie of the Picket line."

After relieving Colonel Wakeman I rode along the line, with which I was already quite familiar; and about 1 P. M., returned to this house, delivered my horse to a guard who stood waiting for him, and walked into a large front room which had been given up by the family to the exclusive use of the division officers of the day. There was a large old-fashioned fire-place in one end of this room, in which a bright log fire was blazing. When I entered, two or three members of a permanent guard which had been stationed at this house, and who had been in fixing the fire and warming themselves, walked out and I was alone. The room was uncarpeted, and the only furniture it contained was a large square pine table, half a dozen wooden bottomed chairs and several three legged stools. I drew one of the chairs up to the fire and, after warming my feet, lit a cigar and settled back for a smoke. Presently I heard a slight knock and a door opening behind me, and turning suddenly around saw the young lady referred to walking slowly toward where I was sitting; but the moment she saw my face she came to a halt, threw up her hands slightly as if surprised, asked to be excused and said she had been informed that the colonel—or rather the Lieutenant colonel of the 124th New York Yankee regiment was there. I immediately arose, told her that the information she had received was correct, and offered her a chair. She declined being seated and asked "Will he be in soon?" "He is in now," I replied with sober face and a polite bow. "Ah!" said she, "but you are not the person; perhaps there are two of *your* regiments called the 124th New York—or do you have two lieutenant colonels to a regiment?" "Only one lieutenant colonel

to a regiment, and only one New York regiment of that number in *our* army that I am aware of, Madam," I replied. "You sir are certainly not the person I was led to suppose was here," came in a sharp quick tone, and "Miss Jennie of the Picket line" wheeled in a pert manner, and was about to leave the room; but I stopped her with a "Pray madam may I be allowed to ask what sort of a looking person he is for whom you are inquiring?" "Well," she answered, drawing her face in a most comical shape, "he is not very handsome, to be sure, but"—her features now straightened to a severe and contemptuous expression, and she looked me square in the eyes—"he is a jolly good hearted old gentleman who would scorn to insult a lady like that horrid Colonel Lakeman * who left here this morning; or to lie to a lady like another Yankee officer I have seen lately. I came to this room to ask Colonel Shiloh †—that's his name—if he would soon be ready for dinner." I then explained to this southern *lady* that her good hearted jolly old friend now wore eagles, and that I had mustered to the rank of lieutenant colonel in his stead. I also asked her if she had any objection to putting to me the same question she had intended to ask him. She replied that she had not, but an hour passed before dinner was announced, and then I did not have the pleasure of her company at the table.

Just after dinner, I was informed that two ladies desired to go through the picket line, and rode out to examine their pass. They were well dressed, intelligent appearing young persons and were mounted on a pair of poorly groomed but fine bred animals. Accompanying them was a middle aged mulatto woman seated on a clumsy looking farm horse and carrying in front of her a large basket filled with bundles. They had refused to deliver their pass to a lieutenant who had charge of a section of the line through which the road they were pursuing ran, but as soon as

* Colonel Lakeman had that morning, I was informed, in answer to an insulting slur on Yankees in general, called Miss Jennie's attention to a sow with a litter of pigs, saying, "allow me to point out to you a family of the genuine F. F. Vs. of Virginia."

† Colonel Cummins had participated in the battle of Shiloh or Pittsburg Landing, and was frequently addressed in a familiar way by his cronies as "Old Shiloh."

I rode up they handed it to me, remarking, "This gentleman here wishes to take our pass from us; and then how could we get through the line again and beside, Mr. Colonel——, at your army head-quarters, said we might keep it until we could come there for a new one." The document referred to now lies before me and reads as follows:

HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC. OFFICE PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL, FEBRUARY 4, 1864.

The bearers, Misses Payne and guard, have permission to pass from their home to Culpepper C. H. for the purpose of making purchases and return.

This pass will expire Feb. 10

M. R. PATRICK,
Provost Marshal General, Army of Potomac.

I asked these ladies how often they had been through our lines on this pass, and they replied "Every day or two since we received it." "But," I said, "it states on its face that it expires February 10th and it is now the 23d—I will be obliged to take it up." They protested very strongly against my doing so but finally rode away.

About noon on the 26th of February I received an order to report forthwith in person to General Birney at Division head-quarters. On arriving there I was placed in command of eight hundred men who had been detailed from the various regiments, and ordered to move out with them and relieve the Sixth corps pickets—that corps having been ordered to make, in conjunction with a brigade of cavalry under Custer, a demonstration against Lee's left. All sorts of rumors were rife, and it was believed by many that the spring campaign was about to open; but the real object was simply to hold the enemy's attention while General Kilpatrick with a division of cavalry moved around their right flank and started off on a grand raid, which it was hoped might result in a temporary occupation of Richmond and the release of our half starved prisoners confined there.

I found the pickets I was sent to relieve stretched over a space six miles in length, and it was past nine o'clock before I reached the most distant post. Early the

following morning (Feb. 27), I was relieved and ordered to proceed to Brandy Station and take charge of a corps fatigue party which was being assembled there, but before I arrived they had been sent off under some one else. I then reported to General French, at Corps head-quarters near Culpepper, and was directed by him to return to my regiment, which he said was under marching orders. I reached our camp at noon, having had a morning's ride of about twenty miles. At 3 P. M. fifty men of our regiment, who had accompanied me to the relief of the Sixth corps pickets, came into camp and stated that they had been relieved at noon by men from the Third division of our corps. That evening we learned that Birney's division was to move out after the Sixth corps. More than half of the men and company officers of the 124th were out picketing on our own division line, but about two hours after midnight they returned to camp.

Our regimental line was formed at 7 A. M. on the 28th, and we moved over to Division head-quarters where the three brigades were soon assembled, and at eight o'clock our division flag was seen moving away, and our brigade—with the 124th the third regiment from the head of the column—was the first to move after it. When we reached Culpepper the 14th Brooklyn, which was stationed there, turned out to salute us, and our division moved through the place at quick time with the regiments formed in column of companies, arms at a shoulder, banners flying, and division band and regimental drum corps playing lively tunes. We soon reached and passed through our infantry picket line, after which we rested for about twenty minutes; then fell in and started on again, moving at a rapid gait hour after hour, resting only five or six minutes at a time, until 3 P. M. when we reached and were halted at James City, on grounds where a division of the Sixth corps had bivouacked the previous night.

James City consists of three or four dilapidated, unpainted, dingy looking frame dwellings and a deserted, doorless blacksmith shop. The 28th was a rather pleasant day, but about 10 P. M. a rain storm set in. But few of the men had brought their tents

with them and nearly all were pretty thoroughly soaked before morning. Sergeant Taft writes in his diary under date of Monday, Feb. 29th as follows: "When I awoke this morning I found that my blankets were all wet, and that I was lying in a pool of water. I slept so soundly that I was not aware it had been raining."

The march was not resumed on Monday and the men spent a portion of the day building bough-houses to protect them from the storm, which seemed hourly to increase in severity. As evening approached it became so cold that the rain changed to ice as it fell. But few had been able to dry their clothes, and nearly all spent a sleepless and most cheerless night.

Tuesday afternoon (March 1st) a small drove of Confederate cattle were brought to our camp and shot. There was considerable discussion among the men as to whether the chief object in slaughtering these cattle was, to prevent the poor animals starving, or to furnish the troops with soup bones. During the day we heard considerable artillery firing in the direction of Madison Court House. Toward evening the rain gave place to snow, and the muddy ground was soon covered with a thin coating of white slush. The night was a little warmer than the previous one but we came far short of sleeping comfortably.

Wednesday morning (March 2) broke clear and cold. At 6 A. M. we received orders to return to camp, and half an hour later were under way. The roads were frozen quite hard when we started, but by 9 o'clock the sun's rays had drawn the frost from the ground and instead of walking on hard rough ruts the men sank at nearly every step, from three to ten inches in sticky, heavy mud. We however pushed on as rapidly as possible, without halting to eat, or even to rest for more than two or three minutes at a time; and before darkness appeared were in our log huts near Culpepper again—covered with mud, very hungry, and oh, how tired.

Thursday was devoted to pounding and washing the dirt from our clothing and scouring the rust from our weapons; after which we resumed our usual camp duties.

Early in March U. S. Grant was made Lieutenant-General, and invested by the President with the chief command of all the armies of the United States. About the middle of the month he announced that until further orders on the subject, his headquarters would be with the Army of the Potomac in the field; and the work of putting that army in the best possible condition for, what nearly every soldier in it believed was to be, a severer campaign than it had yet known, was forthwith begun in earnest, and was most vigorously prosecuted until the order, "Forward against the foe," was issued.

We continued to spend about the usual proportion of our time on the picket lines; but when in camp, large quantities of ammunition, and many an hour hitherto given to recreation, were by special orders expended in target practice and shooting at imaginary foes; and drills, inspections, and reviews, became so frequent as to leave us but few leisure hours. The granting of short furloughs, however, was continued, and on a more liberal scale than usual; and a considerable number of line and non-commissioned officers were detached from the veteran battalions and sent to their respective States on recruiting service.

On the 12th March, a detail consisting of Captain Jackson, Lieutenant Charles Stewart, Sergeants Joshua V. Cole, of "G," Joseph Alwood of "I," and four other enlisted men, whose names I am unable to recall, were sent to Orange County to see what could be done *at home* toward swelling the ranks of the 124th. These parties, especially the Captain, left our camp evidently expecting that when they returned to the regiment they would have the pleasure of bringing with them to its depleted ranks a goodly number of brave volunteer recruits; but our record, it would appear, was already too *bloody*. Our long list of killed and wounded, when contrasted with the comparatively small number lost in battle by Congressman Van Wyck's regiment, the 10th Legion, which had entered the service nearly a year before the 124th, told most seriously to our disadvantage, so far as procuring recruits was concerned. "I find," wrote Capt. Jackson, about two weeks after he had reached home, "that

every loyal person I meet here seems wonderfully proud of, and can tell me all about 'our glorious Orange Blossoms;' but unfortunately nearly every man, woman, and child in the county entertains a superstition that the placing of one's name on the rolls of the 124th is equivalent to signing his death warrant." About the middle of April the Captain became so discouraged because of his want of success, that he asked to be recalled to duty at the front; and on the 24th he, with his party of assistants, rejoined the regiment—but they did not bring with them a dozen recruits.

On the 17th of March Colonel Cummins received an order from Major-General Birney, which stated that, in order to equalize the brigades under him, the 124th New York would be transferred to the Third Brigade, and that the 40th New York, which was then the largest regiment in the division, would be sent in its stead to the Second Brigade. I was at the time absent from the regiment, enjoying a *ten day furlough*, but the following copy of an original document, which I find in the official records of the regiment, shows with what feelings the officers at least contemplated a separation from their *twin brother* regiment, the 86th New York, along and by the side of which they had moved, encamped, and fought from the very first day of their entry into active service. The indorsements show something of the standing of the 124th with the generals who knew most about it.

"CAMP OF THE 124TH NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS, March 17, 1864.

"TO MAJOR-GENERAL D. B. BIRNEY, *Com'g First Div. Third Corps:*

"We, the undersigned, officers of the 124th New York Volunteers, having learned with regret that our transfer from the Second Brigade is contemplated, do most respectfully ask to be allowed to remain in it for the following reasons:

"We have been in this brigade since we came into this division. Having been so long associated with its gallant officers, we have become deeply attached to them.

"It would separate us from the 86th New York, the officers and men of which we hold in the highest esteem, and with whom we have been associated since our organization as a regiment, having fought side by side with them in every engagement in which we have borne a part.

"These considerations, in addition to the very high estimation in which

we have always held our present brigade commander, Brig.-Gen. J. H. Hobart Ward, induce us to make this appeal to you.

"Trusting our conduct, while under your command, has been such as to induce you to give this petition your favorable consideration, we subscribe ourselves,

"Very respectfully your obedient servants.

"F. M. CUMMINS, Colonel Com'ding 124 N. Y. Vol.
H. S. MURRAY, Captain Company B.
JAMES W. BENEDICT, Captain Company D.
IRA S. BUSH, Captain Company F.
THOMAS J. QUICK, Captain Company G.
CHARLES B. WOOD, Captain Company A.
HENRY F. TRAVIS, Captain Company I.
WILLIAM E. MAPES, First Lieut. Company B.
THEODORE M. ROBINSON, First Lieut. Co. E.
JOHN R. HAYS, Lieutenant Company H.
LEWIS S. WISNER, Lieutenant Company K.
JOHN W. HOUSTON, Lieutenant Company D.
CHARLES T. CRESSEY, Lieutenant Company A.

"WILLIAM B. VAN HOUTEN, First Lieutenant and Adjutant."

"HEADQUARTERS SECOND BRIGADE, FIRST DIVISION, THIRD CORPS, March 17, 1864.

"Respectfully forwarded. If, in the opinion of the Major-General commanding, the exigencies of the service will permit, I would also ask that the views of the regiment be carried out. The officers and men are very melancholy in regard to the transfer. The *esprit-du-corps* is great; it is with regiments as with brigades. If a brigade of this division should be exchanged for another, the feelings of all concerned may be imagined but cannot be described. There is *no better* fighting regiment in this division than the 124th New York. They feel proud of their brigade and division. I *sincerely* hope if, in the judgment of the Major-General commanding, the service will not be injured thereby, that the petition of the officers may be granted.

J. H. HOBART WARD, Brigadier-General."

"HEADQUARTERS FIRST DIVISION, THIRD CORPS, March 17, 1864.

"Respectfully returned. The request of the officers of this gallant regiment will be fully considered. The exigencies of the service demand a transfer *now*, but it may not be necessary to make it a permanent transfer. The Major-General commanding will try to meet the views and grant the request of the officers.

"By command of MAJOR-GENERAL BIRNEY.

"CHARLES H. GRAVES, Captain and A. A. G."

The regiment had been instructed to prepare for moving camp, but on the 18th an order came stating that it would be allowed to remain in the camp it then occupied. All reports, however, were sent to, and we received orders from the commanding officer of the Third brigade for about ten days, when we were formally re-transferred to Ward's brigade. Sergeant Taft writes concerning the doings of the regiment from the 19th to the 29th as follows:

"*Saturday, March 19th.*—We received orders about 10 o'clock last night to make ourselves comfortable, as the order to move camp had been countermanded. This news was the occasion of great rejoicing, in the 86th as well as in our own regiment. Have spent the afternoon cleaning up for Sunday inspection. All regular drills and duties were omitted except dress parade, which was held by Lieut.-Colonel Weygant, who returned from furlough this afternoon.

"*Sunday, March 20th.*—Clear and very cold. The whole of the Third brigade was formed in line for inspection, at 9 A. M., on the top of a bleak hill, where there was nothing to break off the piercing wind. Our regiment was the last one inspected, and we stood there shivering until one o'clock.

"*Monday, March 21st.*—Colder than ever. Nearly all the men of our regiment went out on picket this morning.

"*Wednesday, March 23d.*—A heavy storm set in about four o'clock yesterday afternoon, and when we got up this morning we found the ground covered with about eight inches of snow—a very unusual thing for the sunny south, I should imagine. But the sun came out quite warm this morning, and the snow is now (12 M.) wasting quite rapidly. Quartermaster Post has found a sleigh somewhere, and he and several of our line officers who remained in camp are riding about in high glee. General Birney has had an ambulance body placed on runners, and is also enjoying the sleighing. It must have been very severe on our boys out on picket last night.

"*Sunday, March 27th.*—Inspection from nine to twelve by Colonel Cummins. Divine service at the theatre* in the after-

* Immediately after the army had settled in winter quarters there were erected in

noon. Chaplain Bradner opened the meeting, and Chaplain Acker, of the 86th, preached from Matthew x. 6.

"*Tuesday, March 29th.*—Cloudy, windy, and cold. We were ordered to be ready for corps review at nine A. M. Bugle blew 'fall in' at half-past eight, and we formed on color line and stacked arms. Before nine o'clock it began to rain, but at the appointed time, in spite of a cold driving storm, we started for the corps review ground, knowing very well that we would not have a review in such a storm. After we had marched about two miles the order was countermanded, and we returned to camp."

About the 1st of April our division moved to the left some three miles, and occupied a portion of the line which the Third division of our corps had just vacated. The 124th was here assigned to log cabins which had been erected, and occupied for several months, by the 10th Vermont. We found in their camp a regimental chapel which the Green Mountain boys had built in a tasty and substantial manner of hewn logs. It was fifty feet long and thirty-five feet wide. In one end was a speaker's stand, and it was furnished with seats made of split logs hewn very smooth. The first Sunday after our arrival there Chaplain Bradner preached to us a most excellent sermon from Matthew xxiv. 35.

The 86th, as usual, lay adjoining the 124th, and in mounting guard the two regiments united forces, and one line of sentries inclosed the two camps. Our chapel, too, became joint property, and every Sunday afternoon during our sojourn there our chaplains preached alternately to attentive congregations, composed of about equal numbers of men from each regiment.

As the month of April wore away, the fact that our long period of comparative repose was drawing rapidly to a close became daily more and more apparent. On the 12th an order was received directing that all surplus clothing, blankets, and the like, be packed in cracker boxes and sent to Washington, where,

nearly every brigade one or more large log buildings, which were used for public assemblages. These buildings were sometimes called theatres and sometimes chapels.

it was said, they would be stored until needed again, or the owners should call for them. On the 16th all sutlers were ordered to leave the army. On the 21st regimental hospitals were broken up, and the entire ambulance force was kept busy for several days carting the sick, first to division hospitals, and then from the division hospitals to the depot at Culpepper, where they were packed in cars and started for government hospitals in and about Washington. On the 22d there was a grand review by Generals Grant and Meade, accompanied by the corps commanders; and on the 26th the entire army vacated its winter camps and moved out and pitched its canvas and muslin shelters in the open fields—our brigade encamping in a ravine, from which the men had to go half a mile for water, and a mile and a half for wood. To this last movement there was but one accepted interpretation, which was given by the soldiers, one to the other, in such figurative but very plain terms, as "Stand from under"—"Time is up"—"Look out for breakers"—or, "I want to go home."

Since our arrival at Brandy Station, at the close of the Gettysburg campaign, which, it will be remembered, ended with the month of July, 1863, the losses and gains of the regiment, in addition to those already recorded, were as follows:

GAINS.

FIRST LIEUTENANT E. J. CARMICK, COMPANY F.

John McGrath	Company A	John Slawson	Company B
James Smith	" B	William H. Thorp	" B
George Boon	" B	James Lewis	" B
Harvey P. Corey	" B	John N. Carey	" B
John K. Payne	" B	Martin V. Campbell	" B
John White	" B	John W. Stanton	" B
Moses Rumsey	" B	Charles Gordon	" D
Josiah Smith	" B	William H. Gordon	" D
Charles Galicher	" B	David D. Barrett	" D
Martin Everett	" B	Simeon Garrison	" D
Daniel Babcock	" B	James Ryerson	" D
Matthew Babcock	" B	Peter D. Howell	" D
Hezekiah H. Montross	" B	Michael McMorris	" D
Charles Babcock	" B	William H. Morgan	" D
John Morgan	" B	William E. Merritt	" D
Thomas Morgan	" B	Joseph Quackenbush	" D
Joseph Gordon	" B	David D. Sayer	" D

George E. Storms	Company	D	William H. Carley	Company	F
Stephen Valentine	"	D	George H. Crawford	"	G
John Schofield	"	D	Joseph Vredenburg	"	G
Levi D. Fowler	"	D	Archibald Millspaugh	"	G
Sylvester Quackenbush	"	D	Charles E. Owen	"	G
David Barrett, Jr.	"	D	Nathan W. Parker	"	G
Garrett Decker	"	D	John F. Meyers	"	G
Joseph Herman	"	D	John Felic	"	H
Oscar S. Weymar	"	D	Charles E. Hicks	"	H
Almond P. Sherman	"	D	Martin Brennan	"	I
Joseph J. Yeomans	"	D	Kenneth McClellan	"	I
James Walker	"	E	Ezra Williams	"	I

Nearly all the men whose names appear in the above list were volunteers from Orange County, and a considerable number of them had "seen service" in other regiments.

LOSSES.

During the period referred to the following names had, in addition to those of men killed or mortally wounded in battle, been added to our "Death List:"

HOSPITAL STEWARD ISAAC ELLISON.

CORP. Elisha P. Benjamin	Company	B	Private Henry B. Appleman	Company	F
CORP. Robert W. Gardner	"	B	" John Chambers	"	G
CORP. George C. Godfrey	"	E	" Nelson De Groat	"	G
Private Samuel Clark	"	A	" James Cullen	"	I
" Samuel Shultz	"	B	" Daniel E. Webb	"	K
" Henry Hoofman	"	C			

Eighty-two of our original members had, meantime, because of physical debility, arising in most instances from wounds received in battle, been transferred to the Veteran Reserve Corps. The following is a complete list of their names:

CORP. Abram Bellows	Company	A	George Culver	Company	B
Charles H. Valentine	"	A	CORP. Daniel O'Hara	"	C
Robert Potter	"	A	CORP. Oscar Terwilliger	"	C
SERGT. Robt. R. Murray	"	B	CORP. Ephraim Tompkins	"	C
CORP. John Williams	"	B	David Wright	"	C
Moses S. Clark	"	B	William Bodenstein	"	C
Harrison Bull	"	B	George W. Florence	"	C
John F. Brown	"	B	Peter Conklin	"	C
Herman Crans	"	B	William H. Maney	"	C
James Finley	"	B	Isaac Odell	"	C
Dennis McCormick	"	B	CORP. E. Morris Bahrman	"	D
David R. P. Van Gordon	"	B	CORP. Ezra Hyatt	"	D
William E. Titus	"	B	Nathan Hunt	"	D

William H. Callister	Company	D	Sergt. George B. Youngblood,	Company	H
John Gannin	"	D	Samuel S. Youngblood	"	H
Stephen W. Garrison	"	D	Andrew Bowman	"	H
Norman L. Dill	"	D	Thomas H. Baker	"	H
Abram C. Forshee	"	D	Jesse F. Camp	"	H
Joseph B. Ray	"	D	Thornton Dawson	"	H
William H. Tomer	"	D	David Hawley	"	H
Olander A. Humphrey	"	D	David Traphagan	"	H
Sergt. William Price	"	E	Sergt. Amos M. Eager	"	I
John H. Miller	"	E	Corp. Samuel McQuaid	"	I
Charles J. Fosdick	"	E	John H. McAllister	"	I
John H. Little	"	E	Whitmore Baxter	"	I
Charles M. Everett	"	E	James Bovell	"	I
Job M. Snell	"	F	Jacob Chatfield	"	I
William H. Patterson	"	F	Alexander Crawford	"	I
Andrew Mesler	"	F	Nelson Foot	"	I
Abram Drake	"	F	James C. Haggerty	"	I
George H. Langton	"	F	Anson Hamilton	"	I
Clement B. Anderson	"	F	John Hamil	"	I
Corp. Lewis P. Miller	"	G	David L. Kidd	"	I
Corp. Charles G. Cooper	"	G	William Milliken	"	I
Peter F. Bernier	"	G	Corp. George Vanskiver	"	K
William E. Cannon	"	G	Corp. Daniel Carpenter	"	K
John M. Calyer	"	G	George W. Camfield	"	K
George W. Odell	"	G	Hugh Foley	"	K
Abram Stalter	"	G	William H. Carter	"	K
Alexander Trainer	"	G	Ira S. Ketcham	"	K
Charles H. Wright	"	G			

The following sixty-four had been, for the same reason, mustered out of the service, many of them minus an arm or a leg, or otherwise maimed for life:

Adjutant William Bronson.

Corp. William McQuoid	Company	A	James McElroy	Company	C
Samuel L. Conklin	"	A	John W. Smith	"	D
Abraham Hyatt	"	A	Richard Quackenbush	"	D
James Jones	"	A	Jonas F. Quackenbush	"	D
Hervey Kimball	"	A	William L. Becroft	"	D
William Myers	"	A	William McGarrah	"	D
2d Lt. Gabriel S. Tuthill,	"	B	Thomas Storms	"	D
Corp. James Scott	"	B	1st Lieut. Wm. A. Verplank,	"	E
Ezra F. Tuthill	"	B	Corp. Oscar Harris, Jr.	"	E
William H. Luckey	"	B	Corp. Hiram Ketcham	"	E
George Babcock	"	B	Judson Kelley	"	E
Albert Young	"	B	Adam W. Beakes	"	E
Hugh McShane	"	B	2d Lieut. Samuel W. Hotchkiss,	"	F
Daniel C. Rider	"	C	Corp. Michael Rensler	"	F
James Montgomery	"	C	William H. Schofield	"	F
John Tompkins	"	C	Ira Gordon	"	F
George G. Taylor	"	C	George W. Adams	"	F

Richard L. White	Company	F	Capt. Leander Clark	Company	I
Martin W. Quick	"	F	Sergt. Spencer C. Brooks	"	I
William C. Vansickle	"	F	Corp. Samuel Chalmers	"	I
1st Lt. James O. Denniston,	"	G	Corp. John H. Stanton	"	I
Sergt. Robert Fairchild	"	G	James McGregor	"	I
Selah Brock	"	G	Edward Oney	"	I
James M. Miller	"	G	James T. Thitchener	"	I
William L. Miller	"	G	Alexander Thompson	"	I
John Ostrander	"	G	Samuel A White	"	I
Abraham Rapalje	"	G	Jacob E. Smith	"	K
Patrick Toohey	"	G	Egbert S. Puff	"	K
2d Lieut. John R. Hays	"	H	William W. Bailey	"	K
Van Keuren Crist	"	H	William H. H. Wood	"	K
Abram Hawley	"	H	John O'Brien	"	K
John McCann	"	H			

In order to complete the list of our losses, it is necessary to add the names of six others, after each of which the word *deserter* has been written. This I do with exceeding reluctance, not only on account of the black shadow which they cast over the names which precede them, for it is—though improbable—barely possible that one or more of the number may have been captured by the enemy, and have languished and died in some Southern prison pen ;—they are :

Jeremiah Hartnett	Company	A	William Fosbury	Company	G
Samuel Lewis	"	C	John Munhall	"	G
James Ryan	"	C	Robert Wilson	"	I

CHAPTER XV.

ON TO RICHMOND.—IN THE WILDERNESS.

DURING the latter half of March and the month of April a radical reorganization of the Army of the Potomac was effected. The organization of veterans known as the First Corps ceased to exist, and the regiments which had composed it were attached to the Fifth Corps. The Third Corps, too, was broken up; the division which French brought into it, after Gettysburg was assigned to the Sixth Corps, and the "Old Third" became henceforth a part of the Second Corps.

The first and second days of May were devoted by the subordinate commanders to the making of a final and searching inspection of their respective commands; and on the afternoon of the third, six days' rations and fifty rounds of ammunition were issued to the troops. Just after dark that night marching orders reached us, in which the time for the starting of Birney's division was fixed at one hour before midnight. About nine o'clock our regiment was assembled, without arms, in front of Colonel Cummins' quarters, and Adjutant Van Houton read to it, by the light of a flickering candle, the following address, which had just been received:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, May 3, 1864.

"SOLDIERS!—Again you are called upon to advance on the enemies of your country. The time and the occasion are deemed opportune by your commanding General to address you a few words of confidence and caution. You have been reorganized, strengthened, and fully equipped in every respect. You form a part of several armies of your country—the whole under an able and distinguished general, who enjoys the confidence of the government, the people, and the army. Your movements being in coöperation with others, it is of the utmost importance that no effort should be spared to make it successful.

"Soldiers! the eyes of the whole country are looking with anxious hope to the blow you are about to strike in the most sacred cause that ever called men to arms. Remember your homes, your wives and children; and bear in mind that the sooner your enemies are overcome the sooner you will be returned to enjoy the benefits and blessings of peace. Bear with patience the hardships and sacrifices you will be called upon to endure. Have confidence in your officers and in each other. Keep your ranks on the march and on the battle-field; and let each man earnestly implore God's blessing, and endeavor, by his thoughts and actions, to render himself worthy of the favor he seeks. With clear conscience and strong arms, actuated by a high sense of duty, fighting to preserve the government and the institutions handed down to us by our forefathers, if true to ourselves, victory, under God's blessing, must and will attend our efforts.

"GEORGE G. MEADE, Major-General Commanding.
"S. WILLIAMS, Asst. Adjutant-General."

At eleven P. M. we struck tents, and just after midnight bade adieu, for the last time, to our camping grounds about Culpepper, and, in obedience to orders, moved silently forward through the gloom. Hour after hour we plodded on. Daylight came, the sun appeared, and at length, after a march of full twenty miles, we reached the Rapidan at Ely's Ford, and crossed on pontoons to the southern shore. About a mile beyond the river an aide met us with the order, "File to the right and eat your breakfast without delay." It was now ten o'clock. At eleven we were moving forward again toward Chancellorsville, and at two P. M. bivouacked on the old battle field. Hancock had been ordered to halt there and await the arrival of Meade's entire train, which is said to have consisted of four thousand wagons, all of which had been ordered to follow the Second corps across the river by way of Ely's Ford. This would seem to indicate that, unlike his predecessors, Grant had determined, under no circumstances, to return to the old camping grounds north of the Rapidan.

Our resting-place was in the woods—the same in which we had bivouacked on the afternoon of the first day of May, 1863. We were within a mile of the site of the old Third corps hospitals, in which, during the battle of Chancellorsville, nearly three thousand of Sickles' wounded, bleeding heroes were gathered. A quarter of a mile to our right ran that little stream, at the edge of the

woods, the shores of which, just a year and a day before, were moistened with the warm blood of nearly two hundred Sons of Orange, about fifty of whom, with their wounds healed to honorable scars, were again on duty with the regiment. Many of these sought and received permission, during the afternoon, to go for water to this cool stream, in which they had bathed their wounds or laved their parched tongues; but when they reached the spot they forgot their errand, for the ground was strewn with the bleached bones of their dead comrades.

Captain Murray, writing to his father that afternoon, says: "I have been over the old field—seen the place where I was wounded, the identical bog on which I was kneeling when I fell, and the place I was carried to by our boys. Our dead were but partially buried, and skulls and bones lay about in great profusion. I found a skull where Shawcross fell, with a hole in the forehead just where he was shot. Captain Crist found an India rubber blanket marked with the name of the first man who fell in his company. It made my heart sick to look over the ground. I inclose some flowers picked from the spot where my company stood in the fight, and the leaves from an old testament found at the same place."

The Confederate dead, it would seem, had all been decently buried very near where they had fallen. At one place in the woods, just in front of where the battle-line of the 124th had been, we found over a hundred graves. They were generally in rows of from three to ten each, under trees, from the trunks of which patches of bark had been blazed. On these blazed places the number of men buried there, and the company and regiment to which they belonged, was cut, and in many instances the names were given in full. We counted fifty-three graves marked "23d North Carolina." This, it will be remembered, was one of the regiments led against us by that brave Confederate, Colonel David H. Christie.

We spent the night near these scenes of the first principal trial of our mettle as a regiment, and in many a letter written that afternoon there was inclosed a tiny wild flower, which the writer

believed had been nourished by soil enriched by his own blood, or by that of some friend and comrade who had there fought his last fight. It was a very easy matter to discover just where pools of blood had been, for those particular spots were marked by the greenest tufts of grass and brightest flowers to be found upon the field. During the evening Colonel Cummins sent out a burial party to gather up the human bones which lay strewn over that portion of the field on which the majority of the brave boys of our regiment had fallen, and to hide them in a deep grave, away from the gaze of curious human eyes.

The line of advance against Richmond chosen by General Grant led through the Wilderness—"a region interspersed with a few small farms, but whose poor, gravelly soil is otherwise covered, for a few miles, with a tangled forest of oak and shrubbery. It was in this region that the fuel had been cut, ever since the days when Governor Spottiswoode, of the colony, first wrought the iron mines of the neighborhood, to supply the furnaces. Hence arose the coppices which covered the larger part of the surface of the country, in which every stump had sent up two or three minor stems in place of the parent trunk removed by the axe of the woodman, and the undergrowth had availed itself of the temporary flood of sunlight let in upon the soil to occupy it with an almost impenetrable thicket of dwarf oak, chincapin, and whortleberry." *

Greeley refers to this weird region, with reference to Grant's campaign, in the following terms: "The Wilderness is a considerable tract of broken table-land, stretching southward from the Rapidan nearly to Spottsylvania Court House, seamed with ravines, and densely covered with dwarfish timber and bushes, diversified by very few clearings, but crossed by three or four good roads, the best of them centering on Fredericksburg, and by a multiplicity of narrow cart tracks, used in times of peace only by wood-cutters. (It is a mineral region, and its timber has been repeatedly swept off as fuel for miners.) In this tangled labyrinth numbers, artillery, and cavalry are of small account; local

* See Prof. R. L. Dabney's "Life of Jackson," p. 668.

knowledge, advantage of position, and command of roads, everything."

When Hancock's corps lay down to rest in the woods at Chancellorsville, the bulk of Lee's army was believed to be at Orange Court House, thirty miles away, with its most advanced brigades posted behind their strong works on the heights of Mine Run, which was twelve miles distant. Grant evidently hoped, by a sudden movement and rapid marching on the morrow, to get through if not miles beyond this gloomy region, before his adversary, taken unawares, should have time to bring forward a sufficient force with which to intercept, or even check him; but he was not yet thoroughly acquainted with Lee and his army of northern Virginia.

While we slept that night the rebel chief, kept aware, as if by some magic agency, of the designs of the Union commanders, as well as of the movements of our troops, was making the necessary preparations to bring our army to bay and give it battle on ground of *his* choosing. He had determined to leave his elaborate works behind him; to assume a bold aggressive; intercept and attempt to shut our army into the very centre of the wildest section of this most dismal region, where, being thoroughly acquainted with every wood road, and bridle-path, he could, with a few thousand troops, effectually block the main highways, leaving the bulk of his army free, to be hurried, unseen of his foes, hither and thither through the tangled and (to the Union army) apparently impenetrable forests; and hurled in irresistible masses against Grant's moving columns, or the weak points in his half-formed lines. It is generally conceded, by those who are supposed to know most about it, that Lee had not the slightest doubt of his ability to again cause the Union army to *take the back track*, and that right speedily; but he had something to learn of that army's new commander.

In order to a better understanding of what is to follow, we will attempt to convey to the reader what we knew at the time referred to, and have since learned, regarding the "make up" and strength of these mighty armies, just entering on a campaign

of which, as to the number, desperateness, and terrible carnage of the battles fought, no parallel is to be found in the annals of war.

Very few reliable official Confederate documents, concerning the details of this bloody campaign, have been allowed to reach the light. The surviving ex-officers of Lee's army seem to have entered into a compact to carry with them to their graves such facts as they are possessed of concerning the actual number engaged and losses sustained; and to do their utmost to fasten upon the mind of every historian of the war, North and South, who comes to them for information, the impression that the army of Northern Virginia was weaker in numbers, during the first ten days of the great campaign of 1864, than at any other period of its existence. I venture the assertion that it will yet be proven, that it was never stronger.

The published statistics of both armies concerning the number of men who actually took the field, with *weapons in their hands*, at the opening of this campaign, are either mere estimates, or else so warped, shrunken, or distored as to be wholly unreliable, and totally valueless to the reader who is seeking for the truth. Lee had under him three corps of infantry and one of cavalry, viz.:

First Corps. Lieut.-Gen. Longstreet.	Second Corps. Lieut.-Gen. Ewell.	Third Corps. Lieut.-Gen. A. P. Hill.	Cav. Corps, Major-Gen. Stuart.
First Division—Major-General McLaws.	First Division—Major-General Early.	First Division—Major-General Breckenridge.	First Division, ——— General Wade Hampton.
Second Division—Major-General Samuel Jones.	Second Division—Major-General Rodes.	Second Division—Major-General Anderson.	Second Division, —— ——
Third Division—Major-General Pickett.	Third Division—Major-General E. Johnson.	Third Division—Major General Heath.	Third Division, —— —— General Fitzhugh Lee.
Fourth Division—Major-General Field.	Fourth Division—Brigadier-General Hay.	Fourth Division—Major-General Wilcox.	
Fifth Division—Major-General Keershaw.			

These sixteen divisions averaged four brigades each, and each brigade contained from three to eight regiments, and the regiments could not have averaged less than 350 men each. There

were besides in this army upwards of seventy light batteries, each of which mustered from one to two hundred men.*

General Meade's army consisted of thirty-two brigades of infantry, nine brigades of cavalry, and ——— batteries of light artillery. These brigades, with the divisions and corps into which they were formed, were commanded, on the day the campaign opened, by the following named officers:

Second Corps. Major-General W. S. Hancock.	Fifth Corps. Major-General G. K. Warren.	Sixth Corps. Major-General John Sedgwick.	Cavalry Corps. Major-General P. H. Sheridan.
First Division—Brig.-General T. C. Barlow	First Division—Brig.-General Charles Griffin	First Division—Brig.-General H. G. Wright	First Division—Brig.-General Merrit
First Brigade—Colonel N. A. Miles.	First Brigade—Colonel James Barnes.	First Brigade—Brig.-General A. T. A. Torbert.	First Brigade.
Second Brigade—Colonel T. A. Smythe.	Second Brigade—Brig.-General J. J. Bartlett.	Second Brigade—Colonel E. Upton.	Second Brigade.
Third Brigade—Colonel R. Frank.	Third Brigade—Brig.-General R. E. Ayres.	Third Brigade—Colonel H. Burnham.	Third Brigade.
Fourth Brigade—Colonel J. R. Brooke.		Fourth Brigade—Brig.-General A. Shaler.	
Second Division—Brig.-General John Gibbons	Second Division—Brig.-General J. C. Robinson	Second Division—Brig.-General G. W. Getty	Second Division—Brig.-General Wilson
First Brigade—Brig.-General A. S. Webb.	First Brigade—Colonel ——— Leonard.	First Brigade—Brig.-General F. Wheaton.	First Brigade.
Second Brigade—Brig.-General J. P. Owens.	Second Brigade—Brig.-General Henry Baxter.	Second Brigade—Colonel L. A. Grant.	Second Brigade.
Third Brigade—Colonel S. S. Carroll.	Third Brigade—Colonel Dennison.	Third Brigade—Brig.-General T. H. Neill.	Third Brigade.
		Fourth Brigade—Brig.-General A. L. Eustis.	
Third Division—Major-General D. B. Birney	Third Division—Brig.-General S. W. Crawford	Third Division—Brig.-General H. Prince	Brig.-General Custer.
First Brigade—Brig.-General T. A. Egan.	First Brigade—Colonel W. McCandless.	First Brigade—Brig.-General W. H. Morris.	Brig.-General Davies.
Second Brigade—Brig.-General J. H. H. Ward.	Second Brigade—Colonel J. W Fisher.	Second Brigade—Brig.-General D. A. Russell.	Brig.-General Devins.
Fourth Division—Brig.-General G. Mott	Fourth Division—Brig.-General J. S. Wadsworth		
First Brigade—Colonel ———	First Brigade—Brig.-General L. Cutler.		
Second Brigade—Colonel A. Hay.	Second Brigade—Brig.-General J. C. Rice.		
	Third Brigade—Colonel Roy Stone.		
	Fourth Brigade—Colonel J. W. Hofmann.		

The brigades of infantry averaged six regiments each. Many of these regiments did not number over two hundred and fifty

* Among the Confederate brigade commanders were Brigadier-Generals Rosser, Hunter, Hoke, Mahone, Wofford, Jenkins, Brown, Perrin, Dales, Gregg, Milligan, Daniels, Gordon, Pegram, J. M. Jones, G. H. Stuart, Stafford, and Walker.

men for duty, and but few of them exceeded five hundred. The artillery force consisted of about eight thousand men, and the cavalry corps was twelve thousand strong.

Conceding that, in numbers, the veteran armies of the Potomac and Northern Virginia were about equal, Grant yet had with him Burnside's Ninth corps, which had reached the northern side of the Rapidan only two or three days before the campaign opened. This corps was composed of about equal numbers of veterans, untried negroes, and raw white recruits, and carried, it is said, full twenty thousand rifles. To that extent Grant's army certainly outnumbered Lee's.

At four A. M., on the 5th day of May, the Army of the Potomac was awakened from its slumbers. It had crossed the Rapidan without encountering any serious opposition, and had spent the night quietly resting on the northern outskirts of the Wilderness. The Second corps, as has already been stated, lay near the Chancellor farm. The Fifth corps had crossed at Germania Ford, and was at Old Wilderness Tavern, five miles west of Chancellorsville. The Sixth corps had crossed at Germania Ford after the Fifth, and bivouacked for the night on the southern banks of the river. Sheridan, with the cavalry divisions of Merrit and Gregg, was covering the front and flanks of the right column. Wilson had moved with, and was lying in advance of, the Second corps. Burnside had not yet crossed the river.

General Meade's "order of march" for the day, after directing in detail the movements of the cavalry, which was charged with clearing the roads of the enemy's troopers, reads as follows:

"2d. Major-General Hancock, commanding Second corps, will move at five A. M. to Shady Grove Church, and extend his right toward the Fifth corps at Parker's store.

"3d. Major-General Warren, commanding Fifth corps, will move at five A. M. to Parker's store on the Orange Court-house plank road, and extend his right toward the Sixth corps at Old Wilderness Tavern.

"4th. Major-General Sedgwick, commanding the Sixth corps, will move to Old Wilderness Tavern, on the Orange Court-house pike, as soon as the road is clear."

Shady Grove church is situated on the southern outskirts of

the most dense portion of the Wilderness, and about ten miles southward from Chancellorsville. Parker's store is in a direct line, and about one-third of the way from Old Wilderness Tavern to Shady Grove church. Had Grant succeeded in posting his army on this line he would, while being several miles distant from, and facing the Confederates' line of works on Mine Run, (behind which he evidently believed the bulk of the Confederate army confronting him, was being concentrated) have held the Brock road, a passable highway through the dreaded Wilderness. And in a few hours he could have covered his front with a line of breastworks, which would have rendered it almost absolutely impossible for Lee to have prevented his passing the Union army, without serious loss, to the more open country about Spottsylvania.

Promptly at the hour designated (five A. M.) Meade's army was in motion. Sedgwick moved briskly southward along the Stephensburgh plank road, and at seven o'clock the head of his column had reached and was massing in the woods, in rear of Warren's headquarters, which had not yet been moved from the vicinity of Old Wilderness Tavern. Warren had, meantime, pushed out and established his right, consisting chiefly of Griffin's division, about a mile down and across the Orange turnpike. The remainder of his corps, led by Crawford's division, was moving cautiously to the left, along a narrow wood road, which led through a dense growth of underbrush toward Parker's store.

This wood road was occasionally blocked by fallen trees which had to be removed, and before Crawford had proceeded a mile and a half he discovered, riding hastily back toward him, a small and partially disorganized body of Union cavalry, and soon learned that the enemy was not only in force at Parker's store, but was pushing a heavy and continuous column past it, in an easterly direction, along the Orange plank road. On receiving this information Crawford ordered a halt, and dispatched an aide back to Warren for orders.

At about the same time General Griffin, in attempting to advance his videttes, became aware that he was confronted by a

solid battle-line of Confederate infantry, and he forthwith sent a messenger to convey that fact to his corps commander.

Now it so happened that Griffin's messenger, who was the first to arrive at corps headquarters, found Warren engaged in conversation with General Sedgwick, and while he was delivering his message General Meade rode up. After a moment's reflection Meade is said to have remarked, "They have left a division to fool us here while they concentrate and prepare a position toward the North Anna, and what I want is to prevent these fellows from getting back to Mine Run." A moment later Crawford's messenger reached the group. The news he brought changed the aspect of affairs very materially, and Warren was directed to draw in his left, concentrate on the pike, and "attack furiously whatever he could find in his front." Sedgwick was directed to make his way through the woods the best he could, with the divisions of Wright and Prince, and connect with and support Warren's right; while Getty, with the remaining division of Sedgwick's corps, was hurried to the left with orders to seize the Orange plank, in front of where it is crossed by the Brock road, and hold it at all hazards until Hancock's corps could be intercepted in its march toward Shady Grove church, and brought up into line on the left.

At twelve M. the battle was opened by the impetuous advance of Griffin's division, which, with its centre following the pike, tore its way through the vines and brush on either side, and soon came up to and engaged what proved to be Johnson's division of Ewell's corps, with such terrific fury as to force it back, with heavy loss, for over a mile. But at that point Johnson was joined by the balance of Ewell's corps, which had just come up, and the Confederate line was formed on some high ground from which it could not, with the Union force at hand, be driven; and Griffin, while heavily engaged in front, soon found it necessary to look after his flanks. Somewhere off to his right Sedgwick was making his way through the tangled forest, but so slowly that he would not be up for hours. Wadsworth's division was to have come up on his left, but unfortunately had lost the direction, and had swung

around to such an extent that instead of coming into position as directed, it presently ran its left flank into the enemy's lines.

These facts were not unknown to the Confederate chiefs. Now was their time to strike, and they improved the opportunity. Volley after volley was hurled in rapid succession into Wadsworth's naked flank, and the gallant men of that division, hearing the thunder of battle echoing through the woods all about them, seeing nothing ten feet beyond their own ranks, and knowing only that they were being cut to pieces by concealed foes, became confused and fell back in disorder, with heavy loss. McCandless' brigade, of Crawford's division, fared no better, for having become isolated in the impenetrable woods, it was almost surrounded, and driven from the field with the loss of full one-third its numbers. At about the same time Ewell assumed the offensive, with the bulk of his corps, against Griffin, and succeeded, after a desperate struggle, in which both sides lost heavily, in forcing the latter back, and wresting from him all the ground he had gained.

About three P. M. there was a lull in the storm of battle, which, since noon, had raged most furiously; and Warren formed a new line a little west of the Old Wilderness Tavern.

Now let us return to the Second corps, and take a look at Ward's brigade, and especially at the 124th, which we will then follow to the scene of action and into the battle.

At four A. M., on the 5th, the veterans of Hancock's command were awakened from their quiet slumbers on the Old Chancellorsville battle-ground, and directed to prepare and eat their breakfast, buckle on their accoutrements, and remain in readiness to move at a moment's notice—every armed man in the ranks.

Ward's command consisted of the following named regiments: the 99th, 110th, and 141st Pennsylvania; the 40th, 86th, and 124th New York; the 3d Maine, the 20th Indiana, and the 2d United States Sharpshooters. It was one of the largest brigades in the army, reporting for duty the day before marching orders reached it, 172 commissioned officers and 3381 enlisted men; and it carried that morning nearly 2700 rifles.

The gains and losses of the 124th since its organization have already been given in detail; but let us again, as we did a year ago, pass along its lines and note the changes in position of the veterans who remain in it, see just who now compose its fighting strength, and inquire as to where the others are who, though not in the ranks, help to make up the grand aggregate of present for duty in the brigade.

That group of officers sitting under the large tree yonder, at the right of the line, contains the entire field and staff of the regiment. It consists of

COLONEL F. M. CUMMINS.

LIEUT.-COLONEL C. H. WEYGANT.	CAPT. H. S. MURRAY, *Acting-Major*
SURGEON J. H. THOMPSON.	ASST. SURGEON R. V. K. MONTFORT.
CHAPLAIN T. SCOTT BRADNER.	QUARTERMASTER ELLIS A. POST.

ADJUTANT WILLIAM B. VAN HOUTEN.

That second group consists of SERGEANT-MAJOR Thomas G. Mabie, BUGLER Moses P. Ross, and HOSPITAL STEWARD Coe L. Reevs. And that squad still farther away is made up of what is left of our drum corps; you will find there

JOHN G. BUCKLEY, *Leader.*

Charles Whitehead, of H .....Fife.	Robert L. Travis, of F.....Drum.
Arthur Haigh, of H..... "	A. A. Millspaugh, of K..... "
George W. Dimmick, of D..... .... "	John N. Cole, of I..... "
Henry C. Payne, of B..... "	R. L. Stephens, of E..... "

These musicians are an unruly crew. A few days before we broke camp they took to tossing one of their number—Charley Van Gordon, of G.—in a blanket; and because he would not cry *enough*, they gave him such a tremendous toss that they could not hold the blanket when he came down, and his arm was fractured so severely that he had to be shipped to the rear with our sick. And now, as the "fall in" has sounded, let us turn our attention to the rank and file and officers of the line, for in a few moments they will be marching to the front. About a month ago the companies were re-positioned in accordance with the rank of their respective commanding officers.

			Sergt. Jonathan Birdsall, Co. A, *Right General Guide.*
First-Lieut. W. E. Mapes. (B.)	1st. Sergt. C. A. Wheeler.		
	Corp. Simon Bellis.	Jesse Hunter.	
	Corp. J. M. Merritt.	Mathew Crowley.	
	William Slawson.	Patrick Leach.	
	Wesley Storms.	B. M. Little.	
	E. M. Carpenter.	W. H. Luckey.	Sergt. S. Garrrison.
	William H. Hazen.	James Odell.	
	John C. Storms.	Hugh McShane.	
	William H. Merritt.	A. J. Messenger.	
	Samuel Green.	James Gavin.	
	A. W. Tucker.	Joseph Pratt.	
	Samuel Sherman.	*James Smith.*	
	John Eckert.	*George Boon.*	
	Joseph Bross.	*John K. Payne.*	
	*Harvey P. Carey.**	*John W. Stanton.*	
	John White.	*Josiah Smith.*	
	Moses Rumsey.	*Martin Everett.*	
	Charles Galicher.	*Matthew Babcock.*	
	Daniel Babcock.	*Joseph Gordon.*	
	Charles Babcock.	*John Slawson.*	Sergt. Reuben Rinders.
	John Morgan.	*W. H. Thorp.*	
	Thomas Morgan.	*James Lewis.*	
	Martin V. Campbell.	*J. N. Carey.*	
	Corp. *H. H. Montross.*	*J. H. Birdsall.*	
	Corp. Charles H. Bull.		
Capt. H. F. Travis. (I.)	1st Sergt. W. W. Smith.		
	Corp. W. Terwilliger.	William Milligan.	
	John N. Knapp.	William Sutherland.	Sergt. A. P. Millspaugh.
	Thomas Farley.	Robert Wilson.	
	Robert Rose.	Jeduthan Millspaugh.	
	Giles Carran.	Rensslaer D. Baird.	Lieut. Charles Stewart.
	Patrick Keane.	James Flannigan.	
	David Storms.	Matthew Manny.	
	Henry R. Turner.	Newton B. Pierson.	Sergt. James O. Smith.
	Smith Birdsley.	John Gordon.	
	William Edgar.	Patrick Ryan.	
	Corp. Joseph Hanna.	G. N. Tucker.	Sergt. A. T. Vanderlyn.
	Corp. Daniel Longhridge.	Ezra Williams.	
Capt. D. Crist. (H.)	1st. Sergt. Thos. W. Bradley.		
	Corp. Benjamin Dutcher.	W. Buchanan.	
	J. P. Lupton.	George M. Legg.	Sergt. George Butters.
	Milton Crist.	James Crist.	
	Josiah Dawson.	Jesse F. Camp.	
	Edward Hunter.	Grandison Judson.	
	Lyman Fairchild.	William Whiteside.	Sergt. C. W. Tyndall.
	Chester Judson.	John E. Kidd.	
	Francis S. Prown.	Daniel W. Baker.	
	E. D. Van Keuren.	John F. Jordan.	Sergt. C. B. Gallation.
	Corp. W. H. Brown.	Daniel Carman.	
	Corp. A. R. Rapalje.		
Capt. Finnigan. (C.)	1st Sergt. Thomas Taft.		
	Corp. Thomas Rodman.	John H. Finch.	
	Corp. W. W. Ammerman.	Albert J. Bunce.	
	William A. Homan.	John Tompkins.	
	Andrew M. Boyd.	Nathan Edwards.	
	Morvalden Odell.	Frederick Dezendorf.	Sergt. D. W. Boyd.
	Daniel Pine.	W. H. H. Rhodes.	
	Albert Wise.	John H. Blair.	
	Daniel S. Gardner.	James Daniels.	
	Corp. W. R. Owen.	C. F. P. Fisher.	

* The men whose names are in italics are recruits who had recently joined us.

FIRST-LIEUT. E. J. CARMICK. (F.)

1ST SERGT. A. P. Francisco.
CORP. Charles H. Hull. — J. Z. Drake.
CORP. Nathan Hershler. — A. J. McCarty. — SERGT. E. M. B. Peck.
CORP. James H. Taylor. — William Balmos.
J. S. Crawford. — Floyd S. Goble.
G. W. Tompkins. — J. C. Magee.
J. J. Harrigan. — Ransom Wilcox.
W. H. Corley. — James Carty. — SERGT. Charles Peters.
T. R. Allington. — E. Coddington.
H. R. Broadhead. — George Garrett.
B. L. Tompkins. — Edward Sharp.
F. H. Rossman. — F. Rundle.
CORP. James Comey. — Charles Roberty. — SERGT. H. Hammond.
CORP. S. S. Crawford. — Jeremiah Cisco.
CORP. J. M. Young.
CORP. And. Armstrong, of H. — CORP. Charles A. Ensign, of G.
COLOR BEARER—G. W. Edwards, A — CORP. J. P. Adams, of F.
CORP. James P. Moulton, of C. — CORP. Alexander Jones, of G.

CAPT. DANIEL SAYER. (E.)

1ST SERGT. Theophilus Dolson.
CORP. A. W. Lamereaux. — J. H. Johnson.
CORP. W. H. Howell. — W. L. Dougherty. — SERGT. James Sloat.
Abraham Rogers. — George Brown.
Lewis W. Baxter. — Horace Wheeler.
Edward Glenn. — Solomon Carr.
Simeon Wheat. — Lewis Gardiner.
William Decker. — William H. Shaw.
Jacob M. Coddington. — Lewis M. Tonton.
James M. Coddington. — Henry M. Howell.
George Nichols. — John W. Hirst. — SERGT. Benjamin Hull.
CORP. A. W. Miller. — Charles Downing,
CORP. Moses Crist. — *James Walker.*

CAPT. JACKSON. (K.)

1ST. SERGT. W. W. Parsons.
CORP. John C. Vermylia. — Thomas Kincaid.
CORP. H. R. Mayette. — J. McDermott. — SERGT. W. W. Ritch.
John W. Parks. — Patrick Cuneen.
W. H. Falkner. — Michael Cullen. — 1ST LIEUT. L. S. WISNER.
Cornelius Crans. — Isaac Konoff.
Joseph Point. — Samuel V. Tidd. — SERGT. S. W. Smith.
Cornelius Herron. — Gabriel Coleby.
CORP. David U. Quick. — John Studor. — SERGT. W. T. Ogden.
CORP. W. W. Carpenter. — A. S. Frost.

LT. W. H. BENJAMIN. (G.)

1ST SERGT. J. V. Cole.
CORP. G. R. Fitzgerald. — Hector Finney.
Harvey A. Brock. — Mat. Sager. — SERGT. S. T. Estabrook.
Albert W. Parker. — Henry Dill.
David H. Corwin. — W. H. Trainer.
Francis McMahon. — G. E. Griffin.
John Newkirk. — Daniel Smith.
Lewis T. Shultz. — William Jackson. — SERGT. Isaac Decker.
Cornelius Hughes. — A. H. Merritt.
John Trainer. — Joseph Jones.
George S. Crawford. — *Joseph Vredenburg.*
Archibald Millspaugh. — *Charles E. Owen.* — SERGT. Abraham Denney.
Nathan W. Parker. — *John T. Meyers.*
CORP. William Tysoe.

CAPT. CHAS. B. WOOD (A.)

1ST SERGT. John C. Wood.		
CORP. W. H. Campbell.	Joseph Brownley.	
CORP. Robert C. Hunt.	Newton Gotchieus.	SERGT. Peter Rose.
Samuel Yoemans.	Francis B. Gallow.	
William Carpenter.	Robert Ashman.	
Charles W. Gallow.	Daniel Ackerman.	
Leonard L. Jackson.	Patrick Flannery.	
John H. Dingee.	Jacob Wilson.	
Samuel Potter.	John H. Warford.	
Richard Rollings.	Allen Owen.	
Jabez Odell.	Joseph Gardner.	
Joseph L. Simpson.	G. D. W. Roat.	
Theodore Smith.	John H. Conklin.	
James McGrath.	*John McGrath.*	
Michael Hager.	William Saunders.	SERGT. S. T. Rollings.
CORP. Henry Arcularius.	John W. Swim.	

CAPTAIN JAMES W. BENEDICT. (D.)

1ST SERGT. E. Holbert.		
CORP. Wm. F. Quackenbush.	William H. Dill.	
John M. Garrison.	William J. Miles.	SERGT. J. G. Erwin.
James H. Clark.	John Raymond.	
Joel McCann.	Jesseniah Dolson.	
George W. Decker.	Benjamin Gray.	
John C. Degraw.	George B. Kinney.	
Edward Royce.	David F. Raymond.	1ST LIEUT. J. W. HOUSTON.
Coleman Morris.	John Edwards.	
Carl G. Hoofman.	S. W. Garrison.	
William Mann.	H. S. Quackenbush.	
Daniel P. Dugan.	Thomas P. Powell.	
Charles Gordon.	*William H. Morgan.*	
William H. Gordon.	*William E. Merritt.*	SERGT. H. G. Herrick.
David D. Barrett.	*Joseph Quackenbush.*	
Simeon Garrison.	*David D. Sayer.*	
James Ryerson.	*George E. Storms.*	
Peter D. Howell.	*Stephen Vallentine.*	
Michael McMorris.	*John Schofield.*	
Levi D. Fowler.	*Sylvester Quackenbush.*	
David Barrett, Jr.	*Garrett Decker.*	
Joseph Herman.	*Oscar S. Weymer.*	SERGT. W. E. Hyatt.
Almond P. Sherman.	*Joseph J. Yoemans.*	
CORP. R. S. Lamereaux.		SERGT. J. W. Pitts, of K, *Left General Guide.*

The following is a complete list of our men on detached and special duty, who moved with the army, and were frequently under fire, but do not appear in the battle-line of the regiment:

IN AMBULANCE CORPS.

SERGT. Robert Connelly	Company	D
SERGT. O. H. Whitney	"	A
Samuel M. Wheeden	"	D
Charles W. Davis	"	D
Samuel Carey	"	C
George G. King		C
Thomas McBride	"	I
A. J. Van Zile	"	G
Henry Brooks	"	G
H. D. Paret	"	K

AT BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS.

N. A. Sly, of D	*Color Bearer.*
John R. Post, of H	*Clerk.*
Charles W. Bodle, of A	*Clerk.*
Enos Jenkins, of A	*Orderly.*
Joseph Johnson, of A	*Guard.*
John C. Hawley, of K	*Guard.*

AT DIVISION HEADQUARTERS.

James M. Ketcham, of G	*Guard.*
D. P. R. Van Gordon, of B	*Clerk.*

IN PIONEER CORPS.

Corp. William McVay	Company	H
James A. Myers	"	I
Paul Halliday	"	K
James M. Barrett		I
Levi Cartright	"	F
John Polhamus	"	A

SURGEON'S ASSISTANTS.

Corp. John W. Taylor	Company	A
Daniel Stephens	"	D
Daniel Rickenbaugh	"	G
John McGaw	"	I

IN QUARTERMASTER'S DEP'T.

George H. Chandler	*Qr. Sergt.*
W. P. Updegrove	*Com. Sergt.*
Wells Benjamin, of D	*Com. Clerk.*
David D. Post, of H	*Butcher.*
C. C. Lutes, of A	*Ord. Clerk.*
E. Stephens, of A	*Teamster.*
Edward Ginner, of A	"
John Lewis, of A	"
Jeremiah Cole, of F	*Teamster*
J. E. Collins, of I	"
W. H. Decker, of C	"
John Duffee, of H	"
George Morgan, of E	"
Jacob Cameron, of K	"
T. Burhans, of K	"
Charles S. Godfrey, of K	"
David Barnes, of B	"

IN WAGON GUARD.

Corp. Thomas Hart	Company	A
Joseph Wood	"	D
John Skelton	"	K
John Rediker	"	H
Cyrenius Giles	"	G

UNARMED MEN WITH REGIMENT.

George Hawley	Company	B
Alonzo Price	"	K
John H. Brown	"	I
David Currey	"	D

At five A. M. Hancock's corps was in motion. We moved forward at a moderate gait, and with occasional short halts, past the ruins of the old Chancellor mansion and along the Fredericksburg plank for about two miles; when we reached, and changing direction to the right and quickening our pace, pushed forward along the Catharine Furnace road. The sun's rays were exceedingly warm, and before eight o'clock men began to stagger from the ranks and sink down by the roadside overcome by the heat.

About nine o'clock, just as our brigade reached Todd's Tavern, and the head of Hancock's column was a mile beyond, a mounted officer whose horse was almost covered with foam, went dashing past us toward the front. A few moments later a halt was ordered, and Birney's division was directed to mass in an open field just south of the tavern, and throw a strong picket line well to the front. As soon as the pickets were posted we stacked arms; and while the majority threw themselves down by the gun-stacks, not a few old soldiers scouted the idea of lying down to rest until they had first fortified themselves against the scorching rays of the sun by "getting outside of a pint cup of piping hot *Old Java*."

About noon we heard the thundering of artillery away off to our right. Half an hour later we hurried into line, then countermarched and moved back past Todd's Tavern, and striking the Brock road, pushed down it at quick time, and with well closed ranks, toward Old Wilderness Tavern. As we hurried forward the artillery firing became more and yet more distinct, but it was irregular and not very heavy. We were of opinion that our column was marching toward the scene of a brisk cavalry skirmish, but ere long there was borne back to us a dull, heavy, and continuous roar, which told of something more serious and deadly.

Birney's division had the advance; and after marching, with closed ranks and without slackening its pace, for an hour and a half, it reached, and was formed in line at right angles with, and on the east side of, the Orange plank road. Brisk rifle firing was in progress down through the woods in front and to our right. Getty's division, of Sedgwick's corps, was there, skirmishing with Heth's division of Hill's corps. As soon as our line was completed we stacked arms, and in a few moments, notwithstanding the occasional whistle of a passing bullet and the scorching rays of the sun, scores of the Orange Blossoms were lying fast asleep by their gun-stacks.

Mott's division followed close after Birney's, moved on past us and formed line in the woods west of the plank road. Presently a detachment of engineers, accompanied by a strong body of pioneers, advanced a short distance through the brush on the west side of the Brock road, and began throwing up a line of breastworks. Those of us who were awake looked on in momentary expectation of an order to move forward and "lend a hand;" but there was other and more perilous work awaiting us. About four o'clock a most terrific crashing of riflery in the woods in front, and so near that the enemy's bullets whistled over our heads, caused our men to spring to their feet with such alacrity that in less than a minute Birney's entire command had taken arms and was ready for action.

The contest had been reopened in earnest by the impetuous advance of Getty's division. Mott's men moved rapidly forward

and engaged the foe on Getty's right. Heth, who had at first been forced back in disorder, was ere long strengthened by the divisions of Anderson and Wilcox, and Hill's entire corps was soon in line. Hancock's remaining brigades, as they came up, were thrown in on the extreme Union left. The opposing forces drew closer and yet closer together, and the firing being at short range, the fighting soon became desperate and most deadly. Mott had driven the enemy's line in front of him half a mile, but could push it no further, and soon called for help; in response to which our division hurried off at a double quick down the Brock road for half a mile, and then changing direction by the left flank, sprang over some rifle pits on the west side of the road, and plunged into the woods to his assistance.

We were none too soon. Scores of his wounded men were straggling through the woods to the rear, and we were presently run against, and considerably impeded, by a broken line of "white diamonds," falling back in disorder before a wild storm of bullets, which rattled through the brush, pattered against the trees, and hissed and whistled through the air For a moment we halted to rectify our line, and then, strengthened by not a few of Mott's men, who turned about and fell into line with us, we moved forward again, opening a counter fire as we went, which soon turned the tide of battle at that point; and it was again the Confederate instead of the Union line that was falling back. Slowly but steadily they retired before our fresh and withering fire, contesting every foot of ground. We soon began to pass over their dead and wounded, but we left the ground strewn with not a few of our own men. A little farther on we began to take prisoners, sometimes singly, and sometimes in squads of two and three. We could seldom see the enemy's battle-line because of the denseness of the foliage; but powder flashes from the opposing lines often told that they were but a few yards apart.

After we had pushed them back a full mile, the battle-line of Ward's brigade was halted on the eastern edge of a swale, or low piece of ground, which was covered with the most dense growth of saplings I ever saw. The trunks were not larger than one's

wrist. They were from eight to fifteen feet high, with no limbs or foliage except a small tuft of leaves on their extreme tops, and stood so closely together that it was only by pushing them apart that a man could make his way through them. The men of the 124th now caught sight of the enemy's battle-line along their entire front; and in the midst of this—as they at the time appropriately named it—hoop-pole forest, poured into that line such a destructive fire that a considerable number threw themselves on the ground and cried for quarter; whereupon a volunteer skirmish line was ordered out, and brought in upwards of twenty prisoners.

The battle raged with fury to our right and left, and a brisk skirmish fire was kept up along our front until eight P. M., when both armies, as by mutual consent, ceased firing, and lay down for a few hours' rest preparatory to a renewal of the bloody contest at an early hour in the morning. Full twelve thousand men lay dead, dying, or seriously wounded in those most dismal woods, and yet this was but the first scene of the first act of that bloody drama, called the Campaign of the Wilderness. The 124th had taken thirty-two prisoners, including one commissioned officer. It had suffered no loss in prisoners captured or in men killed outright, but twenty-three of the best and bravest in its ranks had been severely wounded, a number of them mortally.

While several thousand of the weary troops, who had borne the brunt of the battle on the 5th, manned the picket lines, which ran so close together that the opposing videttes, for a distance of half a mile, are said to have filled their canteens from the opposite sides of a stream not ten feet wide; and the remainder lay quietly sleeping, with their loaded weapons beside them,—and perhaps "dreaming of loved ones at home"—the commanders-in-chief were in consultation, at their respective headquarters, with their most trusted lieutenants.

Lee resolved to assume the offensive at an early hour in the morning, and dispatched a messenger to Longstreet, whose advance had bivouacked for the night several miles in rear of the battle-field, with an order which directed him to awaken his

sleeping men, move on to the front before daylight, and hold his command in readiness to participate in the grand opening assault.

Grant, after listening to the reports of Meade's corps commanders, instructed Burnside to move forthwith to the front and close the gap between Warren and Hancock, and directed that a general advance be made at five A. M.,—each corps attacking vigorously whatever it found in its front.

The Union line faced toward the southwest, and, when fully formed, was about five miles in length. Sedgwick held position on the right, with his left flank resting near the Orange turnpike. Warren, with his right thrown across the pike, and Burnside, with his left reaching to within a quarter of a mile of the Orange plank-road, held the centre. The left, on which Grant and Meade rightly judged the principal part of the fighting would fall, was intrusted to Hancock, who was permitted to retain under his command, in addition to his own corps, the divisions of Getty and Wadsworth.

Just what was before us no one in the Union army knew; and many of our brigadiers if questioned as to where their own commands were, could have but pointed toward the front and answered "yonder." An officer, who rode the whole length of Hancock's position while the troops were preparing for action, stated that he tried in vain to discover a point from which he could get sight of two hundred feet of the line.

It mattered but little who had the heaviest or greatest number of guns, for the manœuvering of artillery, save on the main roads, was entirely out of the question; and even there it did not seem probable there would be an opportunity of using at any one time, in that vicinity, more than one or two batteries.

Nothing of importance could be accomplished in such a field with cavalry, and Sheridan, with the bulk of his command, was consequently started off during the early part of the night, with orders to pass, by a wide detour, around the southern flanks of the two armies, and make a grand raid on the railroads and depots of supplies to the enemy's rear.

The second day's battle in the Wilderness was to be fought, as

that of the first day had been, almost exclusively by infantry. Again would the Union commanders be obliged to resort, in guidance of their unseen lines, to the use of the compass. Their situation was like that of skilled mariners and naval officers in charge of a mighty fleet, heavily manned, but with guns dismounted, sailing in unknown waters on a murky night; who should unexpectedly find themselves confronted by almost as extensive and well-manned a fleet of foemen, in the same predicament as to guns, but sailing under native pilots; and who could do no better than pipe all hands on deck, spread every sail, and attempt to run down or board and capture every vessel they came in contact with. Grant's order was, "Attack along the whole line at five o'clock."

At five o'clock precisely the entire Union army was either in motion or grappling with the foe, for Lee had already opened the contest by a spirited assault on the extreme Union right. But his main object in attacking at that point was to attract attention from a more important enterprise—that of massing the bulk of his army for a grand attack on the Union left. He had need of more time. Longstreet, whose corps was to be united with that of Hill for the purpose named, did not, it appears, receive Lee's message until two A. M., and, though close at hand, was not yet in position.

Hancock started a few minutes ahead of the prescribed time, and his advance was accelerated rather than retarded by the roar of battle off to his right. The 124th formed part of his advance line, which soon came up to, attacked, and, in the words of the Confederate historian Pollard, "threw Heth's and Wilcox's divisions of Hill's corps in confusion, and pushed them back on Longstreet's column, which had not yet deployed into line."

In this advance the Orange Blossoms added fourteen to their list of prisoners captured from the foe; one of them, a brave little captain, who, while attempting to rally his men only a few feet in front of our line, was collared and jerked back through our ranks by young Rad. Turner, of Co. I, with such force that when his captor loosened his hold he fell to the ground in a sitting posture,

striking so hard that his hat bounced from his head and his hair seemed to stand on end.

After we had proceeded about a mile and a half, and while the foe were yet giving ground before that part of the line in front of Ward's brigade, a halt was ordered. Our regiment had lost in this advance about a dozen men, and had meantime passed over at least twenty of the enemy's dead. We did not cease firing when the halt was ordered, but kept a continuous shower of lead raining through the woods toward where we supposed the battle-line of the foe to be; for we could see nothing of it, though we were kept aware of its presence by the returning bullets, which continually sang about our ears, and occasionally felled to the ground one of our number.

About nine o'clock Captain Sayer came to me, as I stood some ten feet in rear of the centre of the right wing, and reported that his company was about out of ammunition. I immediately ordered him to make the fact known to Colonel Cummins,and received in answer this reply, "Why, Colonel Cummins was carried to the rear fifteen minutes ago seriously, and I am afraid, mortally wounded."

I could hardly believe it possible that the Colonel could have received a wound that was to end his services with the regiment, only a few feet from where I was standing, and have been carried from the field without my knowledge. And yet such was the case. It was only one of the many strange circumstances of that weird battle-field. When Birney's division was moving to the assistance of Mott on the afternoon of the 5th, General Alexander Hays, the commander of our first brigade, who, like Cummins, was a veteran of the Mexican war, was, while riding into action at the head of his brigade, struck down by a rebel bullet fired at random, and fell dead from his saddle, unseen by all save less than twenty of the two thousand men he was leading.

A few hours after the fall of General Hays, Captain Nash, and a lieutenant, whose name I am unable to recall, both of Ward's staff, rode out to find our brigade line, which the former had visited only a short time before. They were accompanied by

Norman A. Sly and John R. Post, of the 124th, who were acting as their orderlies. There was between two of the regiments an opening of about fifty feet, through which the whole party unwittingly rode and ran into the enemy's line; and the two officers were captured, while their orderlies, who rode but a few yards to their rear, taking the chances of having a volley fired after them, wheeled their horses and made their escape. Is it any wonder so little is known concerning the details of the battles of the Wilderness?

The enemy's ammunition must have run out simultaneously with that of Hancock's advance line. At all events, a few moments after I learned of the wounding of Colonel Cummins, their fire gradually slackened and soon almost entirely ceased. About eleven o'clock a supporting line, which was composed in part of Gibbin's division, came up to within a few feet of our advance line and starting small fires there, prepared and commenced drinking coffee; seeing which our men, who had not yet had their breakfast, began asking permission to leave the ranks for the same purpose; but knowing we were liable to be attacked at any moment, and that it was necessary for every man to remain at his post ready for any emergency, I was obliged to deny them the privilege.

But after the "white clubs" had finished their meal the commander of a regiment which was lying immediately behind the 124th, kindly consented to exchange positions with us for a few moments, and immediately formed his command and moved to the front, while we fell back to, and began preparing our breakfast over, the fires his men had left burning. But before we had finished the meal a terrific racket broke out in the woods to our left, and bullets began to fly thick and fast above and among us, passing lengthwise of the Union line. The grand assault which Lee had intended to make at an early hour in the morning had come at last, and was led by Lieut. Gen. Longstreet in person. Six lines deep they come, striking first Frank's brigade of Barlow's division on its exposed left flank, and hurling it back in disorder against the left of Mott's command, which was soon doubled

up and disorganized; and the men of the various brigades, regiments and companies became so inseparably mixed, that all efforts to re-form them there among the trees and brush, in face of Longstreet's impetuous advance, proved unavailing.

Hurrying the 124th into line, I caused it to change front to the left, so as to face toward whence the bullets came, and attempted to prevent the further spread of the disaster, but I might as well have tried to stop the flight of a cannon ball, by interposing the lid of a cracker box. Back pell-mell came the ever swelling crowd of fugitives, and the next moment the Sons of Orange were caught up as by a whirlwind, and broken to fragments; and the terrible tempest of disaster swept on down the Union line, beating back brigade after brigade, and tearing to pieces regiment after regiment, until upwards of twenty thousand veterans were fleeing, every man for himself, through the disorganizing and already blood-stained woods, toward the Union rear.

The foe meantime pressed rapidly forward, lighting up the dim forest with powder flames which continually flashed from his smoke-enveloped line, like heat lightning from a cloudy horizon, and pouring into our disorganized host a continuous fire, so terrible in its effect as to leave the ground over which we passed strewn afresh with hundreds, yea, thousands of dead, wounded, and dying. Hancock's officers, in their frantic efforts to rally their men on a new line, planted their colors on nearly every rising piece of ground they came to; and, waving their swords and gnashing their teeth, shrieked the order, "*Rally men, rally, for God and your country's sake, rally,*" but to no purpose. The colors were no sooner planted by those in front, than they were swept away, and in some instances trampled under foot, by those from the rear, who, while doing their best to get out of range of the enemy's bullets, continually echoed and re-echoed the *Rally men, rally.*

At one place about a mile and a half in rear of the farthest point of our advance, on the banks of a little stream that ran through this vast, weird, horrible slaughter-pen, a skeleton line of mixed troops was partially formed; and for a moment it

looked as if a sufficient number might be rallied there, to at least check the thus far almost undisputed advance of Longstreet's lines. Gathering a corporal's guard of the 124th about me, I sprang over the stream and, bidding my color-bearer (Corporal Washington Edwards) unfurl our flag, planted it on the half-formed line; but almost the next moment a heavy volley coming from the woods to our rear and left, told that a fresh and unexpected body of the foe was close upon us, and away went our men again in an instant. I now became thoroughly disheartened, and, abandoning all hopes of gathering my command south of the Rapidan, sheathed my sword, and moved back with the rabble.

The enemy, when he had forced us back full two miles, suddenly ceased firing. Our understanding of this fact at the time was, that the Confederate lines had become so broken and disorganized their commander deemed it expedient to halt and re-form them. It was not until the following day we learned that the real cause was the serious wounding of Longstreet—the head and front of the avalanche which had overwhelmed and well-nigh destroyed us. The fall, at that critical moment, of Lee's great lieutenant was, to say the least, an undisguised blessing to Grant's army.

Thus far there were, in this disaster to the Union arms, four striking points of resemblance to remind one of Jackson's great flanking feat, in this same woods just a year before; and it is very evident that Lee expected from it similar final results. But in this last particular he was grievously mistaken. In both instances he had placed the bulk of his army under the immediate command of, and left the entire details to, a lieutenant whom he rightly judged better qualified than himself for the work in hand. In both instances the result had been eminently all he could wish, so long as that lieutenant had remained in command. In both instances these great lieutenants had fallen at the head of their troops, when the tide of their victory was at its highest flood. And in both instances it is claimed these Confederate chiefs were accidentally shot by their own troops. Now let us follow this day's work to its close, and compare results.

About the time the enemy's bullets ceased falling among us, we came to a wood road which ran obliquely across and nearly parallel with, our line of retreat. The fleeing multitude, no longer spurred on by death's messengers, soon slackened its pace, and here on this road I again directed Corporal Edwards, who now constituted my entire command, to loosen his colors to the breeze; and to my unspeakable delight, the men began to flock in from the woods on either side, and rally around their old flag again. Presently we saw General Birney and staff riding toward us. I now had with me, marching along in good order, about fifty men. When the General had arrived within thirty yards of the head of my little column, he drew rein by the side of the road, and his staff formed in line behind him. Turning toward my men I was about to bring them to a shoulder, that we might be ready to salute him as we passed; but we did not have the pleasure of paying him that honor, for just then a shell—the first I heard that day—came screeching down the road, over our heads, and struck and exploded almost directly under his horse. And when the cloud of dust it raised had disappeared, his staff officers were gone, and the General—whose fiery steed had evidently become wholly unmanageable, and could be seen bounding from one side of the road to the other—was soon borne out of our sight.

Half a mile farther on we came to a strip of slashing. Across this there suddenly loomed up a strong line of log breastworks, from the top of which several Union flags could be seen waving in the breeze, whereupon an old sailor in our ranks fitly expressed the feelings of all by shouting, "Ship ahoy, land ahead, boys, land ahead!"

These works did not seem to be very heavily manned at that point, but scores of mounted men were riding rapidly up and down behind them. Quickening our pace, we soon passed in through an opening, and found ourselves again on the Brock road. Along the south-western side of this, there stretched as far as the eye could penetrate in either direction, one of the strongest lines of temporary works it had ever been my fortune

to stand behind. No more need of shouting "halt, men, halt," not a man crossed the road. Staff officers from the various brigades and divisions were there directing those who came in to the particular portions of the works where their respective commands had been ordered to rally; and all hurried off at a double-quick in the direction indicated, so that in an incredibly short space of time Hancock's command was substantially re-formed, re-supplied with ammunition, and ready for action. This wall of refuge in the Wilderness, conveyed to the army just what Grant's famous dispatch issued several days later said to the country: "*I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.*"

As soon as word reached Lee that Longstreet had fallen, he hurried to the front and took personal command of his assaulting column, which was now composed of nearly two-thirds of his entire army; but it required full two hours for this most cautious chieftain to make ready for a renewal of the pursuit; and when at length his bugles sounded the forward, Hancock was anxiously waiting to receive him. About three P. M. the Confederate advance struck and immediately drove in our pickets, who had barely time to make their way through the slashing, and crawl over the works, ere their pursuers appeared in solid battle line, and the combat was re-opened with a terrific crash of riflery all along the lines; but so impetuous and persistent was the advance of the victorious foe, they were half-way through the slashing and within thirty yards of our works before we could bring them to a stand.

Occasionally one of our number would fall dead—pierced through the brain—or be carried to the rear wounded in the head, hand, or shoulder. Beyond this the rapid fire of the foe had but slight effect on our line, behind its bullet-proof cover; over the top of which we, with deliberate aim, hurled into their exposed but unwavering line an incessant and most deadly fire. Again and yet again did their shattered regiments in our front close on their colors, while fresh troops from the rear moved up and filled the gaps.

Grant, in his conduct of that great campaign, which had then

but just begun,—and which a famous historian truthfully says stands unequaled by any on record, in the elements that make war grand, terrible, and bloody—has been stigmatized as "The butcher who thought but little, and cared less for the lives of his men;" while Lee has ever been regarded as a general who, above all others, was most chary of the lives of those under him. But certainly in this instance the epithet butcher, if applied to either, should rest on Lee. Yet the valor and stubborn resistance the Confederates that afternoon displayed, came by an accident very near being signally rewarded.

During the contest the woods between the lines, at a short distance to the left of Ward's brigade, took fire. And just when the enemy—after having withstood our deadly volleys for over an hour—began to show signs of exhaustion, and a Union force was being made ready for a charge when the critical moment should arrive, a strong wind suddenly sprang up, and carried the fire to our log breastworks, along which the flames spread with wonderful rapidity. Several regiments to the left of the 124th, unable to withstand the heat and smoke, abandoned the works, though several individual members of these commands remained until their hair was singed, for the smoke and flames were blown directly into their faces. Presently huge clouds of strong black pine smoke, such as almost eats one's eyes out, rolled over and completely enveloped our regiment.

At this critical moment the Confederates rushed up and occupied the deserted works to our left; seeing which the Union reserve, posted as a second line about fifty yards to our rear, opened fire, and, supposing our regiment had moved down the road to the right, or fallen back behind them, with the regiments which had been stationed on our left, sent a volley right into the cloud of smoke which hid us from their view. Fortunately their aim was so high that the most of their bullets passed over our heads.

General Ward had, for half an hour or more, been sitting on a log or pacing to and fro, about ten paces behind the centre of our regiment, and had not yet left us. Up to that moment he

had not spoken a word to any one, but when he heard these bullets from the rear whistling so close to his ears, he turned to me with the order, "Take your regiment to the rear of those ——— ———," and walked rapidly away. As we passed over the second line which was lying in shallow rifle-pits, I looked back and there floating on the works just where ours had been, could be seen, through the smoke, a Confederate battle-flag. A moment later we heard, above the roar of riflery, the crashing thunder of artillery.

A determined charge in front of an opening in the works about twenty rods to our right, had cleared the way for a battery which had been run out and placed in such a position as to rake the outer face of our breastworks, which, for the distance of full seventy rods, ran perfectly straight; and were now heavily manned with Confederate troops. As soon as these batterymen, with guns double shotted with canister, began mowing down the foe, our infantry rushed back to the now blackened and smoking works—for the flames, having consumed the most combustible portion of the dry bark from the logs, had subsided—and opened a most deadly fire into the very faces of the bleeding foe on the opposite side. Presently the batterymen were ordered to cease firing, when, with a tremendous shout, over the works rushed the Union line with clubbed muskets, swords, and bayonets, right at the now totally demoralized Confederates, who broke for the rear, and fled in the wildest disorder across the slashing and down through the woods again; and, so we were informed by prisoners captured the next day, did not halt to re-form their lines until they were back on the very ground they started from in the morning.

The day was now so far spent that the Union generals did not think it expedient to attempt to pursue the fleeing enemy. A strong picket line was, however, thrown out and advanced half a mile or more, without encountering any opposition.

As soon as the smoke lifted and the roar of battle died away, we very naturally began looking about us, and the sight which met our gaze was horrible beyond description. Quite a number

of Confederate dead and seriously wounded, lay inside the works, while the ground outside of them was literally covered with the mangled bodies of their dead and dying; together with a considerable number who, to escape death feigned it, and dropping down among the corpses of their comrades, remained there until discovered by our men and made prisoners. Thus ended the second day's battle of the Wilderness, so far as Hancock's command was concerned. Some two hours later, however, Sedgwick's corps was attacked in flank, and suffered heavily in loss of prisoners. And when darkness finally put an end to the day's work of death, the two mighty wrestlers, all covered with wounds and gore, lay down, too much exhausted to rest; on substantially the same ground they had respectively occupied previous to the opening of that day's battle.

We spent the night sitting or lying on the roadside, with our weapons close beside us, ready to spring to our feet and man the works in front at a moment's notice; and many confidently expected that an order to advance and again engage the foe would reach them at an early hour in the morning; but they were mistaken. The dread contest was not to be renewed on that weird field, o'er which twenty-five thousand dead or wounded contestants were now scattered amid the bleaching bones of former comrades in arms.

This mysterious, sanguinary conflict of two days' duration—this most desperate struggle in the wild forest, between mighty armies, the lines of which no one saw; and which were only to be traced in their continued changes throughout the contest by the thunder crash of riflery and the shouts of the hidden, grappling contestants, was to go into history as an unfinished or drawn battle. There graduates of the same military school had met for the first time as commanders of opposing armies, and each it would seem had misunderstood the character and under-estimated the fighting qualities of the other. Lee had been aware of the fact that Grant had a slight advantage in the number of men under him, but he regarded that as of but little consequence in that weird, tangled, and to his opponent unknown wilderness.

Grant knew very well that Lee was thoroughly acquainted with the dismal woods through which he had resolved to pass, but to that fact he attached very little weight, for the fighting of a battle there was no part of his programme, but

> "The best laid schemes o' mice and men,
> Gang aft a-gley."

Grant, unexpectedly finding his advance disputed by Lee's army, had gathered up his mighty host and made a most determined and desperate effort to crush his adversary in this very Wilderness; but, because of that adversary's superior knowledge of the field, he had after a bloody struggle of two days' duration, and a loss of fifteen thousand men, been compelled to admit that he had been forced into undertaking what he could not accomplish. And Lee, who had essayed to paralyze the new Union commander as he had Hooker a year before, and then by bold desperate flank attacks so demoralize our entire army that he might at his leisure drive it back over, or hurl it into, the Rapidan, had at length, after suffering a loss almost equal to that of his foes, given up the impossible task, owing in part at least to his opponent's slight advantage in numbers. And there they stood throughout the third day, behind the strong works of their respective lines—for Lee's army had spent the night erecting breastworks—each ready to receive battle, but neither minded to attack; and the thought of retreat foreign to both.

About two o'clock that afternoon, May 7th, Hancock riding along by Ward's brigade, directed that a regiment be sent out to gather up the rifles and muskets that lay scattered along its front. The 124th was selected for this purpose, and in less than an hour we must have collected at least fifteen hundred stand of arms, frequently drawing them from under the dead bodies of the men who had carried them; and in several instances unclasping, with not a little difficulty, the cold, clammy fingers which had tightened about them when their owners were in the last agonies of death.

At five o'clock I received a detail calling for two commissioned officers and forty enlisted men for picket duty; and an hour later

these were moving through the woods on their way to the front, prepared to spend the night pacing to and fro in the gloom, amid the putrid bodies of friends and foes—for only those who had fallen nearest the works had been buried—listening to every unusual sound and watching the movements of every shadow, not knowing at what moment a body of the foe might be discovered stealing toward them.

The result of the Battle of the Wilderness as compared with the result of the Battle of Chancellorsville, has been tersely stated by one of our most able historians in substantially these words: "Hooker fought the Battle of Chancellorsville and went backward; Grant fought the Battle of the Wilderness, and went *—forward.*"

LIST OF KILLED AND WOUNDED OF THE 124TH, AT THE BATTLES OF THE WILDERNESS.

COLONEL F. M. CUMMINS—*Wounded.*

COMPANY A.

Jacob Wilson	*Killed*
Joseph F. Simpson	*Wounded*
Leonard L. Jackson	"
James McGrath	"
John McGrath	"
Frank B. Gallow †	"

COMPANY B.

CORP. Simon Bellis	*Wounded*
John Morgan	"
Thomas Morgan	"
E. M. Carpenter	"
Joseph Bross	"
James Lewis	"
John Payne	"
Jesse Hunter	"

COMPANY C.

CORP. Andrew M. Boyd	*Killed*
CORP. James P. Moulton	*Wounded*
John H. Blair	"

COMPANY D.

SERGT. Ebenezer Holbert	*Wounded*
Jesseniah Dolson	"
John Edwards	"
M. Mc. Morris	"
George W. Decker	"
Garrett Decker	"
John Raymond	"
S. W. Garrison	"
James H. Clark	"
Daniel P. Payne	"
William H. Dill	"
Benjamin Grey	"

COMPANY E.

Joseph H. Johnson	*Wounded*
Solomon Carr	"

COMPANY F.

Eli Coddington	*Wounded*
Andrew J. McCarty	"

† Slightly wounded—remained on duty.

COMPANY G.

Sergt. S. T. Estabrook	*Wounded*
Harvey Brock	"
John J. Taylor	"
John Trainer	"
W. H. Trainer	"
Hector Finney	"
Henry Dill	"

COMPANY H.

Corp. Benjamin Dutcher	*Killed*
Sergt. Thomas W. Bradley	*Wounded*
Sergt. Clark B. Gallation †	"
Lyman Fairchild	"
Josiah Dawson	"
Daniel Carman	"
Gov. M. Legg	"
William H. Brown †	"

COMPANY I.

First Sergt. W. W. Smith	*Wounded*
Sergt. A. T. Vanderlyn	"
Corp. Joseph Hanna	"
Corp. Whitmore Terwilliger	"
William Milligan	"
Rensselaer D. Baird	"
John Gordon	"
Mathew Manney	"

COMPANY K.

Sergt. W. W. Parsons	*Wounded*
Cornelius Crans	"

Brigade Color-Bearer

Norman A. Sly, of D †	*Wounded*
Total Casualties	60

† Slightly wounded—remained on duty.

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THROUGH THE WILDERNESS.—AT SPOTTSYLVANIA C. H.

DURING the forenoon of the 7th, General Grant became thoroughly satisfied that General Lee was preparing to receive battle, rather than planning an offensive movement; and he resolved to make forthwith another attempt to extricate his army from the dense Wilderness into which his wily antagonist had entangled it. Our immense trains were accordingly sent to Chancellorsville, and there parked for the night; and as soon as darkness closed about us a general movement of troops was begun; but just where our objective point was located, no one save the enemy and those high in authority seemed to know.

During the evening the Fifth Corps passed by where our regiment was lying—moving along the Brock Road toward the left—and about midnight our division was withdrawn from the works, and conducted along the same road toward the right; but we had not proceeded more than two miles, when a countermarch was ordered, and we were hurried back to, and directed to re-occupy, the same position behind the breastworks that we had been withdrawn from.

May 8th.—There was considerable picket firing along our front yesterday and last night; and at early daylight this morning I was awakened to read and sign the following circular order from Brigade Headquarters: "You will cause your command to be awakened immediately, and see that your men prepare and eat their breakfast without delay; marching orders may reach you at any moment." Twenty minutes later our blankets were rolled, and the air was freighted with the aroma of boiling coffee. We had not enjoyed more than two hours' repose on our soft beds of mother earth, for it was after two o'clock when we returned from

our midnight tramp; and it could not have been later than four o'clock when the order to *turn 'out* reached us. As soon as my men had partaken of their early breakfast—composed exclusively of hard-tack and coffee—they were permitted to lie down again, with their accoutrements buckled, their weapons beside them, and their rolled blankets under their heads; and thus the majority of them slept soundly until eight o'clock. Then the expected "fall in" was passed down the line, and springing to our feet we were ready for the "forward," which came a moment later, when we started off, following the direction the Fifth Corps had taken.

"Last night we were fooling the Johnnies, but this time we mean business—mind what I am telling you," one of my old men remarked to a recruit; and the reply came, "Who, the Yanks or the Rebs?" To which the first speaker replied, "Both, I reckon." And then a dozen voices made earnest answer: "You're right old boy." After these remarks the men of my leading companies remained comparatively quiet for half an hour or more. A very noticeable fact, for when moving along at route step, as we were then marching, banters and jokes usually fly thick and fast. At length some one, who was marching just behind me, re-opened the conversation with, "I say Joe, this little chap from out West —I don't believe he knows when he's whipped. If it hadn't been for his coming along with us we would have been back to our old camp again by this time. To be sure, we got thrashed *from way back* at Fredericksburg, under Burnside; but Fighting Joe took us back from Chancellorsville before we were half-whipped, and Meade, you know, marched us back from Mine Run without fighting us at all to speak of. It's my opinion we got whipped like the mischief the other day, what do you think about it?" "Got whipped!" replied the soldier questioned, "How do you make that out? Do the Johnnies usually cry quit, and retreat when they have whipped us? Not much they don't. You might as well say we got licked at Gettysburg. I'll just bet you a plug of tobacco and a briarwood pipe, that this army never re-crosses the Rapidan until we go home to stay!"

Such short, pungent arguments as the above, between the

fighting men of the army, who are so often misnamed the common soldiers, always attracted my attention; and I fell into the habit of jotting them down in my diary as I rode along. I can not tell just why I did it, but now as I look over these notes in the light of subsequent experience, I am frequently astonished at the wisdom, sound judgment, and accurate forecast of events contained therein.

That 8th day of May was exceedingly warm, and when we had marched about two miles the column was halted, and our brigade filed into an open field near an old frame house, and remained there about an hour. Then we returned to the road and marched on two miles further, when we were again halted near another dwelling, called Todd's Tavern. During this last short march several of our men were sun-struck. Presently a refreshing breeze sprang up, which, while it cooled our heated brows, brought to our ears the thunder of distant battle. Then came orders directing the formation of a battle line through the woods across, and at right angles with, the road; and Birney's division filed to the right, and took up a position among some tall pines, and, after establishing a picket line along our front, we set to building breastworks. This occupied our time until four o'clock, when we rested from our labors, very tired and hungry too, for we had not eaten anything since morning. Twenty minutes, however, sufficed for the cooking and eating of our late dinner, and then a general gathering of pine *feathers* was begun, in anticipation of a comfortable night's rest; for the noise of battle had ceased, and all believed their day's work had been fully accomplished. But about five o'clock this bed-making business was brought to a sudden close by the whistling of bullets among the trees, and the rattle of riflery along our picket line. Whereupon all hands dropped their pine boughs, grasped their weapons, and hurried to the works.

The pickets in our immediate front were speedily driven in, and before they were fairly over the works, a body of Confederate dismounted cavalrymen came charging through the woods toward our fortified line. But a well-directed fire soon caused these *foot*

horsemen to right about and "charge, boldly charge" the other way; whereupon our pickets, suddenly becoming very brave, bounded over the works again, and rushed back to their posts, gathering in as they advanced some twenty able-bodied, and a considerable number of wounded prisoners. After the excitement of this affair had died away, those of our number whose turn it was to sleep, finished their beds and lay down on them well content; and the night passed without further disturbance.

The following extract is from the official report of the doings of our brigade on the 9th: "At about three P. M. marched toward Spottsylvania C. H. The 20th Ind. and 124th N. Y. Vols. were, by direction of Major-General Birney commanding division, thrown out as skirmishers for the division, and the 99th Pa. Vols. was dispatched toward the ford of Po River, to intercept the crossing of the enemy, who it was supposed was retreating in that direction, from our skirmishers. In the meantime the brigade was massed under cover of a hill, preparatory to crossing the river. Our skirmishers met with but little opposition at the ford, and crossed at once, capturing a few prisoners from the rear guard of the enemy."

In this movement to and across the Po River, which, at the ford referred to, was about twenty feet wide, and from six to eighteen inches deep, our skirmish line marched about eight miles in less than three hours; during which we occasionally exchanged a few shots with the enemy's rear guard, but encountered no serious opposition. We did not see any considerable numbers of the foe until we began to descend into the valley through which the Po ran. Here we found a small Union regiment, which had been sent forward on a flanking expedition from General Mott's division, actively engaged with a body of the enemy, which had made a stand on the farther bank of the river. As we hurried forward down the slope, to the assistance of this command at the ford, we passed over a considerable number of dead and wounded soldiers of both armies. Presently, when we had arrived at a point within one hundred yards of the river, a Confederate battery was opened on us. I do not remember ever

having heard guns fired with greater rapidity. Fortunately for our advancing line, their aim was just high enough to carry the screeching shells over our heads; but alas, not a few of them struck, and exploded right among the poor wounded fellows we had just passed over. The thunder of discharge and explosion, added to the rattle of small arms now gave the affair the semblance of a battle of considerable magnitude. But it was of short duration, for the troops at the ford, who had thus far done all the fighting, while very thankful for our timely support, were not minded to have the honor of routing the enemy grasped from them; and before our advancing line reached the river, they, with a wild charging shout, rushed forward through the water at the foe, who, instead of waiting to cross bayonets with these resolute fellows, about faced and ran for dear life across an open field, and soon disappeared in the woods beyond.

The capture of this noisy battery, which was posted in plain sight on a little knoll some forty rods to the right and rear of where the enemy's battle line had been, now became the immediate object of our ambition. But unfortunately—or perhaps fortunately for some of us—our skirmishers no sooner appeared on the southern shore than these Confederate artillerists, evidently thinking existing circumstances were such as rendered discretion, in their case, the better part of valor, ceased firing. Then mounting, and putting whip and spur to their teams, hurried out of range of our bullets, and galloped on to some safe retreat, out of our sight.

As I rode past the wounded on the hillside, to whom reference has already been made, I saw, moving about among them a German vivandier. Now I had never before seen a woman on the battle-field, and when the shells were falling thick and fast among these prostrate men, I looked back to see what effect their exploding would have on her; and to my surprise she was sitting on the ground, apparently unmindful of danger, holding her canteen to the lips of a prostrate Union soldier, whose head rested on her shoulder. We encamped in the woods that night some two miles beyond the ford.

May 10th.—We ate breakfast before daylight this morning, and about nine o'clock were in motion again. Our brigade moved back to and re-crossed the Po River, and, after halting half an hour on the northern shore, marched to the right, about a mile, and relieved a brigade of Warren's men, whom we found posted behind light earthworks which had evidently been erected during the night. We now formed part of a new main line, which we soon learned had been posted there to confront Lee's army. Holding a strongly fortified position on the heights about Spottsylvania C. H., he was defying our further advance in that direction.

General Grant, referring to this movement from the Wilderness to Spottsylvania C. H., in his official report, says: "On the morning of the 7th, reconnoissances showed that the enemy had fallen behind his intrenched lines, with pickets to the front, covering a part of the battle-field. From this it was evident to my mind . . . that he would wait an attack behind his works. I therefore determined to push on and put my whole force between him and Richmond; and orders were at once issued for a movement by his right flank . . . But the enemy having become apprised of our movement, and having a shorter line, was enabled to reach there first."

Throughout the forenoon of the 10th, a desultory skirmish fight, emphasized occasionally by a volley of riflery or a few rapid discharges from some battery of light guns, told that the two lines were again so close together, the opposing armies were able to watch the movements of each other. That another general engagement was imminent, no one doubted; and those of us who were in the woods lay on the ground hour after hour, listening for such a crashing, heavy peal of battle thunder as would indicate the opening onset.

Hancock's corps now formed the Union right, and the bulk of it held position on high ground that overlooked Po River. His most advanced videttes were engaged with those of Hill's command. Warren, whose corps composed the right center, kept a part of his command busy throwing up earthworks, while he was with the balance, preparing to assault the enemy's fortified posi-

tion to his front, which he evidently believed was not yet very heavily manned. The Sixth corps came up and took position on the left of Warren, so close to the enemy that a considerable number of its members were killed while going into line, among them its brave and noble commander, General Sedgwick, who, while superintending the posting of one of his batteries, and laughing at one of his men who was unable to resist the impulse to cringe a little when the enemy's bullets passed very close to his head, was struck in the face, and expired instantly. Burnside had been ordered to take position on the left of Sedgwick's Corps.

During the early part of the afternoon several unsuccessful attempts were made, by detached bodies of the corps of both Warren and Hancock, to carry various portions of the enemy's formidable works. In these attacks the 124th was not called to participate. But about four o'clock a grand assault by the entire left wing of Grant's army was ordered. The position we were to attempt to carry, is thus described by General Hancock in his official report: "This was, perhaps, the most formidable point along the enemy's whole front. Its densely wooded crest was crowned by earthworks, while the approach, which was swept by artillery and musketry fire, was rendered more difficult and hazardous by a heavy growth of low cedars, mostly dead, the long bayonet-like branches of which, interlaced and pointing in all directions, presented an almost impassable barrier to the advance of a line of battle."

The 124th, about two P. M., marched to the extreme right of Hancock's line, to support a battery there posted. After remaining with the battery half an hour, we received orders to return forthwith to our original position behind the works. At half-past four we moved, in company with our entire division, toward the left. After proceeding in that direction about a mile, we were halted at the base of a thickly wooded hill, and there formed for the assault. Vast bodies of troops could be seen going into position on either side of us. The regiments of Ward's brigade were massed in column in the following order, so close together

that the field officers were obliged to take position on the flanks of their respective commands:

86th New York Volunteers.
3rd Maine Volunteers.
124th New York Volunteers.
99th Penn. Volunteers.
141st Penn. Volunteers.
20th Indiana Volunteers.
110th Penn. Volunteers.
40th New York Volunteers.

Just after we had completed our formation, General Crawford, of Warren's corps, came walking along the front, accompanied by several of his staff. He was gesticulating in an excited manner, and, on looking toward our solid column, wrung his hands, and exclaimed in a tone of intense anguish: "This is sheer madness." and then looking to the front continued, addressing a member of his staff: "I tell you this is sheer madness, and can only end in wanton slaughter and certain repulse."

Then came a half-hour of weary waiting, during which our minds were filled with anxious forebodings of coming evil and transitory hopes that, as darkness was fast approaching, the doubtful undertaking would after all be deferred until morning, or perhaps, abandoned altogether. But at length the order "move forward" was given, and off, up the hill, at a rapid gait we started, tearing our way through the brush, leaping across ditches, and clambering over felled trees. Presently we came upon and drove in the enemy's pickets, whose bullets, fired as they fled to give warning of our approach, felled to the earth several gallant men of the 86th. The expected storm of battle now opened with horrid crash and roar, to right and left. And soon from front as well, the sound of riflery burst forth. But onward and upward, tumbling into ditches, tripped by tangling vines, lacerated by springing branches and pierced and torn by the dry pointed cedars,—onward, right onward through the gathering gloom, filled with whizzing, whistling bullets, we forced our way.

Anon the dim outlines of what appeared to be a heavy earthen breastwork loomed up before us, and the commanders of the three

leading regiments, which had become so intermixed that they had to be handled as one body, rushed to the front, shouting the charge, each determined that *his* standard should be the first one planted on the enemy's works. A moment more and we were through the abatis, when lo, a very fort instead of simple earth-works frowned upon us, while at our feet yawned a deep ditch about twenty feet wide, half-full of water. A single volley sufficed to clear the ramparts of their sharp-shooters there posted, but from within came the sound of voices of artillery officers, giving commands which told of a coming shower we had no desire to breast, and could not then escape by flight.

The best and only thing to be done, was to hug the earth as closely as possible, until the first and severest blast had swept over us. The order *lie down* was obeyed with alacrity. We were not a moment too soon, for just then we heard the Confederate command "fire," and out leaped the powder flames; and over us passed a volley of canister which made the very earth beneath us seem to shiver, and sent to their last home a score or more of men from the regiments behind us, which had been halted to re-form their lines at the lower end of the abatis, some fifty yards away. The commanders of these rear regiments, comprehending the situation of affairs at the front, about faced their commands and hastened down the hill, followed by a continuous fire of shot and shell which made fearful havoc among them. Presently the Confederate artillerymen slackened their fire, but we knew it was only to depress their pieces; and springing to our feet we retraced our steps to the base of the hill, where we spent the night in line of battle.

The charging columns to our right and left, were even less successful than Ward's brigade, and their losses were infinitely greater. The repulse of Hancock and Warren was complete and most disastrous along the entire line. The Union losses in these assaults are stated, on competent authority, to have been fully five thousand men, while that of the enemy did not exceed as many hundred. The 124th in this disastrous affair was peculiarly fortunate, losing but four men—all wounded.

As a slight offset to the terrible losses of the Second and Fifth corps in these assaults, that never should have been made, a detached brigade of the Sixth, had during the afternoon succeeded in capturing, with but trifling loss to itself, about eight hundred prisoners.

The Confederate fortifications which we had attempted at such fearful cost to carry by direct assault, had been erected months before; and were in many particulars more formidable than the line at Fredericksburg, against which Burnside had hurled to their destruction so many of his best regiments, in December, '63. But General Grant had started out on this campaign with the assertion, "Oh, I never manœuvre," and now that he had pounded in vain, to his heart's content against Lee's left, he resolved to try what could be accomplished by a sudden sally against the Confederate right centre, where it was said a more inviting point of attack presented itself.

For this operation Hancock's corps was selected, and just after nightfall on the 11th, we set out on a journey toward what was known as the Brown house, in front of which that portion of the Confederate works to be assaulted was situated.

Orders were issued commanding that the strictest silence be maintained in the ranks, and instructing all officers to refrain from speaking above a whisper, in directing the movements of their troops. And oh, what a dreary, tedious movement it was! A drizzling rain had been falling all the afternoon, and continued to fall at intervals throughout the night.

We crept along, a step at a time, hour after hour. Since the fall of Colonel Cummins I had hardly closed my eyes, and an irresistible desire to sleep now stole over me, despite the most determined efforts of my will to ward it off. My men had been kept under arms the night before, and many of them the night before that as well, so that they too were absolutely unable to remain awake. And yet their sense of hearing was in no wise blunted, even in the midst of their fitful slumbers. They would invariably drop to the ground, and instantly fall asleep whenever the column halted; but the moment the troops ahead of them

started they would spring to their feet without orders, and march on until the column halted again. Our horses even, were seized with the same irresistible desire to close their weary eyes; and with their noses almost touching the ground, would weave to and fro like drunken men.

I had never before suffered such acute agony from any cause; my eyes would close, do what I would to prevent it; and, in order to escape a fall from my horse, I would lean forward and wind my arms about his neck, but the poor brute's head would invariably sink lower and lower, until I would feel myself sliding head foremost toward the earth, at which with a desperate effort, I would straighten up sufficiently to be able to make such a tug at the reins, and such a poke with my spurs, as to arouse my usually spirited, but now most docile beast. But the very next moment my eyelids would drop again, and presently I would feel the poor brute's body weave, and his legs tremble as if he was about to fall. Then again I would dismount and attempt to hold myself up, by throwing my arm over the animal's neck; and leaning against his breast, or else grasping hold of and resting my forehead on the saddle. But in these efforts too, I failed of success, for down would go his head, or else I would feel his body giving way and myself going down.

About two A. M. my adjutant (Lieutenant Van Houten) rode up to me with a canteen which he said, as he handed it to me, contained some very poor commissary whisky, and added "but it is the very best I can get." Under any other circumstances I should have told him to take away the vile stuff, but on this occasion I grasped the proffered canteen most eagerly; but instead of drinking from it, poured out as much as I could hold in the palm of one hand, and dashed it in my eyes. But even that did not keep me awake more than ten minutes.

A half-hour later several men belonging to one of our New York regiments,—the 86th, I think,—which was marching just ahead of the 124th, coming to what appeared to be a marshy place, moved to the side of the road in search of water; but failing to find any, and the column not being in motion, one of them

sat down on a fence and, falling asleep, tumbled off and broke his neck. The surgeon of his regiment being close at hand, hurried to the spot, and after a short examination, simply asked, "Who is it?" for it was so dark he could not tell positively, and then pronounced life extinct beyond the shadow of a doubt, and moved away. In less than ten minutes from the time the unfortunate man sat down on the fence his comrades were digging his grave.

At another time when the column was at a halt and the road was covered with sleeping men, a horse having become frightened by falling down when asleep, sprang to his feet and started off at a run down the road, over the sleeping men, a number of whom were severely injured by being trodden upon, before he could be caught. This thoroughly aroused the entire brigade, and caused something of a stampede, yet very little noise was made; and as soon as the injured men could be gathered up and started back toward the ambulances, we resumed our marching by jerks again, and as before dropped to sleep the very instant the troops ahead halted. At length seven hours after we had started, and during which we had made but three and a half miles, the head of our column reached, and was halted in, the field where our formation for the charge was to be made.

Before attempting to trace in detail the part taken by the 124th, in the most successful charge ever made by Hancock's famous corps, and the bloody and protracted contest over the possession of the captured works which followed, let us endeavor to get a correct conception of the more general phases of the battle.

Greeley, in his *American Conflict*, tells the story of the charge and fighting of Hancock's Corps in this wise: "When morning came, the rain had given place to a fog of exceeding density, under cover of which Hancock sternly advanced, in two lines; Barlow's and Birney's divisions forming the first; Gibbon's and Mott's the second. Before them was a salient angle of earthworks held by Edward Johnston's division of Ewell's corps. Swiftly, noiselessly sweeping over the rugged, difficult, thickly wooded intervening space—some twelve hundred yards, Barlow's and

Birney's divisions dashed, with a thundering cheer, over the front and flank of the enemy's works, surprising and overwhelming the rebels in their trenches, and capturing Johnston with most of his division; also Brigadier-General George H. Stewart and part of two brigades; also thirty guns. The number of prisoners captured and sent to the rear was over three thousand. Hancock wrote in pencil to Grant: 'I have captured from thirty to forty guns. I have finished up Johnston, and am going into Early.' He had in fact, though he did not know it, all but captured Lee himself, and had nearly cut the rebel army in two. But the surprise was now over, and the rally of the rebels was prompt and vigorous. Their case was desperate—for defeat was now annihilation—and they fought with invincible ardor and resolution. . . Cutler's and Griffin's divisions were detached from Warren and sent to the aid of Hancock, who still held fast to the captured work, but could not go beyond it; while Lee made five successive and desperate assaults on him, with intent to hurl him back; the men fighting hand to hand, with their respective flags often planted on the opposite sides of the same breastwork. These assaults were all repelled with frightful carnage; but Hancock was unable to advance, as he had expected to do, and ultimately got off but twenty of the captured guns. Rain set in again at noon; but the fighting continued till near midnight, when it was terminated by Lee's desisting and leaving Hancock in possession of his hard won prize."

Coppée, in his work entitled *Grant and his Campaigns*, writes, —"Silently and unseen, the corps moved upon the unsuspecting enemy. They passed over the rugged and densely wooded space, the enthusiasm growing at every step, until with a terrible charge and a storm of cheers, they reached the enemy's works, scaled them in front and flank, surprising the rebels at their breakfast, surrounding them, and capturing Edward Johnston's entire division, with its general; two brigades of other troops, with their commander, Brigadier-General George H. Stewart, and thirty guns. The number of prisoners taken was between three and four thousand. It was the most decided success yet achieved

during the campaign . . . Hancock pushed upon the second line of rifle-pits, and, notwithstanding the desperate resistance, stormed and took it. But if the enemy had been surprised in the morning, he now made most desperate efforts to recover his lost ground. Thus the battle became general. The Ninth corps on the extreme left, and the Sixth corps on Hancock's right, were at once pushed forward to support Hancock's advance; while on the opposite side Ewell was reinforced by divisions from the corps of Hill and Longstreet. While the battle was thus concentrated on our left, Warren became hotly engaged on our right; but although he charged with great vigor and intrepidity, the enemy's position in his front was found to be impregnable. Thus for three hours the fighting continued; but although we resisted the desperate attacks of the enemy upon Hancock and Burnside, it was evident that we could make no further advance. The ground was, in our front, swept by a storm of projectiles of every kind. . . . Charge and countercharge were made until nightfall, and the carnage was terrific."

Lossing, in his admirable history, after telling of the assault and capture of the first line, in language similar to the above, and quoting Hancock's pencil note to Grant, says, "Hancock failed to 'go into Early' in the way he anticipated. The enthusiasm of his troops after their success, was unbounded, and seemed equal to any demand. Indeed, they could not be restrained. They pushed forward after flying Confederates through the woods toward Spottsylvania Court House, for a mile, when they were checked by a second and unfinished line of breastworks, behind which the fugitives rallied and turned upon their pursuers. The entire Confederate line had been aroused by the surprise to a sense of great peril, and the most desperate efforts were made to prevent further disaster, and to recover what had been lost. Ewell was immediately reinforced by troops from the corps of Hill and Longstreet, and Hancock's victors were thrown back to the line they had captured, and upon these heavy masses of the foe were thrown . . . Lee was determined to re-take the works Johnston and Stewart had lost. Five times he hurled a

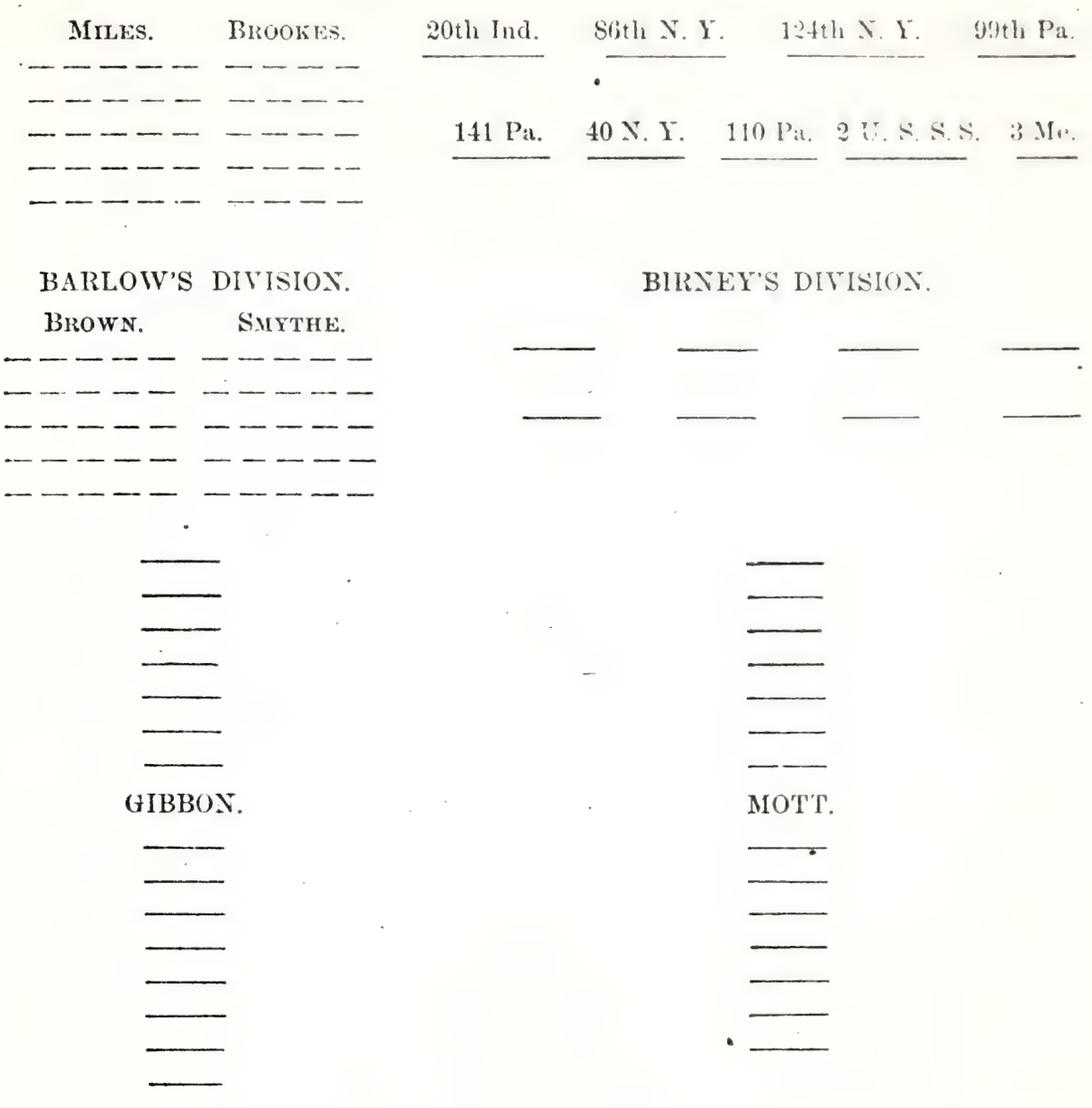
tremendous weight of men and weapons upon Hancock, in order to dislodge him. The combatants fought hand to hand most desperately, and the flags of both were several times planted on each side of the breastworks, simultaneously, and within a few feet of each other Lee's assaults were repulsed with dreadful carnage on both sides, and yet he persisted, notwithstanding rain fell heavily all the afternoon. It was midnight before he ceased to fight, when he sullenly withdrew with his terribly shattered and worn columns, after a combat of twenty hours, leaving Hancock in possession of the works he had captured in the morning, and twenty guns. So ended the Battle of Spottsylvania Court House, one of the bloodiest of the war . . . Probably there never was a battle where so many bullets flew in a given space of time and distance."

Swinton, in his critical comments on the battle, hints at the culpable blunder of *some one*, which robbed us of fully one-half the legitimate fruits of our splendid victory; and then gives in most graphic language an account of what he saw on visiting the works on the morning after the battle: "But though," he writes, "the tactical dispositions to carry the works were admirable, little provision had been made looking to that critical moment that comes after an assault, when the victory must either be assured by a decisive blow or risk a lapse of all the gain . . . Of all the struggles of the war this was perhaps the most deadly—the enemy's most savage sallies were directed to re-take the famous salient which was now become an angle of death, and presented a spectacle ghastly and terrible. On the Confederate side of the works lay many corpses of those who had been bayoneted by Hancock's men when they first leaped the intrenchments. To these were constantly added the bravest of those who, in the assaults to re-capture the position, fell at the margin of the works, till the ground was literally covered with piles of dead, and the woods in front of the salient were one hideous Golgotha. I am aware that the language above used may resemble exaggeration; but I speak of what I personally saw."

Pollard, viewing the battle from a Confederate standpoint,

sufficiently corroborates the accounts of Northern writers already quoted, to satisfy the reader that they have not overdrawn the bloody picture, or ascribed to Hancock's troops an undue meed of praise. "In the morning of the 12th," he writes, "it was found that Hancock was again in the centre, vigorously assaulting Johnston's division. This division held a salient of the Confederate line; and as the enemy, taking the forces within flank, rushed over the angle, they were quickly in possession of the work, capturing most of Johnston's men along with their commander, and taking twenty pieces of artillery. Charge after charge was made by the Confederates to regain what ground they had lost. It was a conflict of sublime fury and terrible carnage. The dead and wounded lay piled over each other, the latter often underneath the former. What remained of Ewell's corps held the enemy in check with a courage that nothing could subdue. General Hill moved down from the right, joined Ewell, and threw his division into the struggle. Longstreet came on from the extreme left of the Confederate line; it was a dead-lock of slaughter, in which neither side gained ground, and the intervening space was piled with slain. At the close of the day the enemy held about three hundred yards of the Confederate works."

Let us now return to the open field where Hancock's weary troops, having completed their preparations, are lying on the ground, snatching a few moments' sleep, while waiting for the order, forward. The corps has been disposed for the assault as follows: Birney's division in four battle lines, with Ward's brigade in front, the 124th composing the right centre of his first line; Barlow's division formed to the left of Birney's in two lines of masses, Miles' and Brookes' brigades in the first line, and Brown's and Smythe's brigades in the second line, each regiment forming double column on the centre; Mott's division supporting Birney's, and Gibbon's division supporting Barlow's—thus:



The distance from our front to the enemy's line was about one thousand yards. The intervening space in front of Birney was uneven, and that half of it nearest the foe, thickly wooded. In front of Barlow the cleared ground extended up to the enemy's works. The rain had ceased falling, it was past four o'clock, and the day was breaking; but a dense fog concealed our presence from the view of the unsuspecting enemy's videttes.

At half-past four I stood, with my horse beside me, in rear of the centre of my regiment, every other member of which, so far as I could see, except two of the color-guard, were lying on the ground, apparently fast asleep. I had unstrapped a rubber coat from my saddle, and put it on, outside my overcoat, for it

was damp and very chilly. In order to keep myself awake I had bitten my tongue, so that blood flowed from it quite freely, I was wondering at the relief this afforded me when, suddenly a hand was laid on my shoulder, and wheeling about I found myself confronted by General Ward.

The General had his cloak wrapped about his massive form, was unattended, and seemed in a most gloomy mood. After referring to the repulse of his brigade on the 10th, he addressed me in a most earnest manner, substantially if not word for word, as follows: "Colonel, you have been assigned a post of honor. I expect you to take your regiment over the works this time or die in the attempt. Give your orders in a whisper, preserve strict silence in your ranks when you advance, and do not fire a shot this side of the enemy's works. You will take direction from the 20th Indiana, the second regiment to your left." He then walked rapidly away, to give, I presume, similar instructions to the other leading regiments of his brigade.

At half-past four, just as the first rays of day began to break through the fog, the order *move forward* was given. My men, though they had been unable to keep their eyes open, had retained a firm hold of their loaded weapons, and at the whispered, *up, men*, sprang to their feet wide-awake. Even my jaded horse, as I mounted, pricked up his ears and shook his head as if to say, I too, am ready for the fray

Since the opening of the campaign we had been facing death so much of the time, our sensibilities may have become somewhat blunted. It is certain that the great majority of the men of my command, while fully assured that in a very few moments they would be called to enter upon one of the most desperate undertakings they had ever known, made no determined efforts to keep awake, even after they had fixed bayonets, and formed for the charge; but on the contrary lay down and yielded to the impulse to close their eyes, the moment the opportunity was given them.

At the order *forward, guide left, march!* which was given in a suppressed tone, every man of the 124th stepped briskly and

resolutely forward, save one. This was a recruit whose name I had not yet learned. He was a rather rugged appearing person, but did not look to be over seventeen or eighteen years of age. Riding up to him, I placed the point of my sword against his body, and ordered him to move forward instantly. But he did not stir, and I repeated my order, accompanying it with a threat that, unless he obeyed forthwith, I would run him through, and emphasized the threat with a slight thrust which I believed caused the steel to enter his flesh half an inch, or perhaps, a little more. But yet he stood his ground, and bracing himself said, "I am too sick to take a single step—run your sword through me if you will, I had as leave die here as anywhere else." * I believed the latter half of his statement, and leaving him standing there, hurried to the front and centre of my advancing line.

I was exceedingly proud of the sons of Old Orange as they moved into action that morning. There was not only nothing to indicate weariness in their gait or mien, though I knew full well how terribly jaded they were, but somehow they appeared taller than was their wont. There was that too in the handling of their weapons and in the unordered but continual quickening of their pace,

* In December, 1875, I was at a religious meeting held in the Trinity Methodist Church in Newburgh, at which the theme of professing Christians harboring and treasuring up ill feelings the one against the other, was dwelt upon at considerable length, and in a very forcible manner. At the close of the service a stranger approached me, and extending his hand, addressed me as near I can remember in this wise: "You did me a great injury once, and the very sight of you, ever since, has aroused within me a most unchristian feeling. And in order to rid myself of this feeling I have come to you to say that as I hope to be forgiven, I freely forgive you." I looked at the man in amazement, for I could not recall ever having seen him before. This I told him, and added, "but if I have ever unwittingly done you an injury, I am heartily sorry for it." He then told me his name, and related to me the circumstances narrated above. He was the recruit referred to. My sword it appears had sunk into his flesh much deeper than I thought, inflicting a severe wound from which he did not wholly recover for months. He declared on his honor that he was at the time, physically unable to take another step; and he evidently yet regarded my conduct toward him, as most brutal. Nevertheless had I executed my threat and run him through on the spot, I would have done a simple duty, in the eyes of military law; for once on the battle-field, sickness and cowardice are synonymous terms. I fully believe the man is honest in his statement, and only regret that the opportunity to ask his pardon for the injury done him, was not sooner given me. And yet, being faliible, and acting in the capacity of a commanding officer, I can not to-day see wherein I exceeded in the least my simple duty—*such is war.*

until I was forced to spur my horse to a lively trot to keep ahead of them, which thrilled me with a feeling of confidence, in both them and myself, such as I had never experienced before. Their battle line all the way across the field was most superb, elbow touched elbow from flank to flank—not a break or a waver in it. Then into the thick woods we plunged, or under the hanging branches, and through the briars and brush which tore both clothes and skin. Occasionally a man would trip and fall, but the next moment he would be in his place again. The enemy's pickets must have been sleeping, for notwithstanding the noise made by the snapping of dry twigs as we passed over them, and the rattle of the brush as we were forcing our way through it, they evidently had not the slightest intimation of our approach until we were close upon them, when they hurriedly discharged their pieces, and fled to give warning to the troops of their main body.

Only one of these shots took effect on our line. That struck a man, near the colors, in the leg, causing him to drop out of the ranks. This instead of impeding our advance, served to quicken the speed of his comrades, who, a moment later, catching sight of the frowning works, sent up a wild, ringing shout and dashed madly forward, grasping by the foot and jerking back one of the fleeing pickets who was half-way over the works; and crowding their leader's horse into the ditch in front, where his rider was obliged to leave him, and hasten to clamber over the earthen barrier, lest his regiment should lead him instead of his leading them. Several of our number, while straightening themselves up on the top of the works, were pierced by bullets fired by the rallying foe, but a moment later we bore down on their half-formed line with a force that could not be resisted.

Then ensued one of those hand-to-hand encounters with clubbed rifles, bayonets, swords and pistols, which defies description. Some cried for quarter, while others would not yield until felled to the ground by sturdy blows, pierced by bayonets, or disabled by bullets; while yet others throwing down their arms, skulked from tree to tree, or taking the chances of being hit by Minié balls they knew would be sent after them, bolted at the top of

their speed, in a bee line, toward the Confederate rear, mentally singing, perhaps, that old couplet,

> He who fights and runs away
> May live to fight another day.

Officers of the opposing forces cut and slashed with their swords, and fired with their revolvers into the very faces of each other. In the midst of the melee one of my men who had just smitten down an opponent by a blow delivered with such force as to break off the stock of his rifle, was seen to rush forward the next instant to the relief of an appealing Confederate who had been literally pinned through the body to a tree, by a ramrod fired by some excited Unionist.

A Confederate colonel of the famous Stonewall Brigade, having emptied the last barrel of his revolver, gracefully surrendered by reversing his empty piece, and handing it to me, remarking as he did so, "I ask as a favor to be sent off the field under guard, for I do not care to be considered one of that flock of sheep,"—pointing at, and referring to the last remnant of his command, which having just been captured and disarmed by the 124th, was being hurried over the works toward the Union rear; there to be picked up by the supporting lines.

All that portion of Johnston's division in our immediate front, including a light battery—some of the gunners of which we bayoneted at their pieces, having been disposed of, the men, without waiting to re-form, or for the orders of their officers, rushed on through the forest shouting like mad men, shooting at every fleeing Confederate they saw, picking up prisoners by the score, and sweeping away every living thing from in front of them, for full one-third of a mile.

Ward's second line came up while we were yet engaged in the contest over the enemy's guns, and had entered into the pursuit with such spirit as to lose their organization at the very outset, the best runners bounding to the front, while the less active gradually fell to the rear. At the distance from the main line indicated above, the air began to be filled with whistling bullets,

coming from the woods in the front. The Unionists increased their fire and our men began to fall, here one and there one. Presently we came to a light line of rifle-pits behind which the advance halted. About a hundred and fifty yards farther on was an unfinished or partially built line of unoccupied breastworks, while from the woods beyond there came a sharp crackling of riflery which told of a line of battle firing as it advanced. Our further success depended on our reaching these works first, and in sufficient force to hold them.

But a part of the 124th was now with me, and the only color close at hand was the State flag of the 141st Pennsylvania. This was in charge of a lieutenant, who had with him eight or ten men of that command. The roar of riflery from the enemy's advancing line, grew louder and yet louder. The hissing, whizzing bullets came thicker and faster. Our situation was now most critical, no one seemed inclined to advance beyond the pits, and some of the men turned about and started toward the rear. The standard of the 141st was, at my request, advanced, but ere its bearer passed over the rifle-pits he fell seriously, if not mortally, wounded; whereupon the lieutenant rushed forward and grasped the falling color, but a moment later he too was disabled, and our rallying line began to give ground again. At this I shouted "cowards," hearing which a corporal to whom the wounded lieutenant had passed the flag, stepped up and handed it to me, declaring that he and his surviving comrades would follow the old flag into the very mouth of the infernal regions, if I would carry it there.

A moment later some fifty of us started with a wild, charging shout across the intervening space, but we were too late. As I planted the Pennsylvanian's standard on the works, the advancing Confederate line hove in sight, a terrible volley swept over and into us, and I fell among the wounded; and was hurriedly borne toward the Union rear.

On to and over the works rushed the solid and fresh line of the foe, sweeping back—as we a few moments before had done—everything in front of them. It was the piercing Southern squeal,

instead of Northern shout, that now rent the air, and resounded above the roar of battle, over the fields and through the woods of Spottsylvania; carrying joy to the wounded Confederate, but bringing bitter disappointment to the expiring Unionist who had hoped to die shouting victory on a field his valor had helped to win.

On rushed the foe, driving our disorganized battalions back through the camps, to the outer or main line of captured works; into which troops from front and rear were speedily crowded until our men stood shoulder to shoulder from five to ten ranks deep.

Then ensued that unparalleled struggle of eighteen hours' duration, over a strip of loose upturned earth some four feet high and less than four hundred yards long, in which, hours before the contest ended, there fell a number of men sufficient for the building of a barricade of human flesh, along the entire line of captured works, three feet through and so high that there was not a man in either army tall enough to stand at its base and look over at his enemies on the opposite side.

The main body of the 124th, now under command of Major Murray, had, on falling back, taken with them two of the captured brass guns, and a quantity of fixed ammunition. They were given position in that portion of the works now known to history as the *Angle of Death*. Speedily manning these guns they turned them upon the advancing foe, and under the direction of Captains Wood and Travis—both of whom had served in Ellis' howitzer company through the Bull Run campaign—used them most effectually until their last round of ammunition was expended.

The principal features of this protracted and most deadly contest have already been given in the quoted passages from noted authors, found in the preceding pages of this chapter. And as I was not privileged to remain at the front and personally witness the many noble acts performed by the members of my gallant regiment, throughout that bloody day and the eventful night which followed, I will now ask my readers to accompany me across the battle-field to the general hospitals several miles to the rear.

The minnie ball by which I was wounded seemed to fall from the clouds, but came, I have no doubt, from the rifle of a Confederate sharpshooter posted in one of the tall trees which stood just inside the works we essayed to occupy. He wasn't a "crack shot" either, for his bullet, evidently aimed at my head, missed the mark by several inches. It however struck and passed downward in an oblique direction through the calf of my leg, taking off a slight splinter from the bone, and severing the muscles to such an extent as to render the limb totally useless for the purposes of immediate locomotion.

Fortunately, just as I fell, eight Confederates, who had escaped from the first line of works and taken shelter behind this inner line, finding themselves caught between two fires, threw down their rifles, and sprang over the works and surrendered. Hastily tearing the flag of the 141st from its staff I thrust it inside my vest, and drawing and cocking my revolver pressed these prisoners into service as stretcher bearers. Without a moment's delay they picked me up very tenderly, using my long rubber overcoat as a stretcher, and set off toward the Union rear. And they made most excellent time. To be sure I held my naked sword in one hand, empty Confederate revolver in the other, and strove hard to look very ferocious. But somehow I soon became thoroughly convinced that these southern gentlemen were as anxious as myself to get out of range of the bullets which whistled about our ears in a most careless manner, and of the shells which occasionally went crashing through the trees above and about us.

For a considerable distance the earthworks at which I fell afforded us some protection against the bullets of the advancing Confederate lines, but whenever we came to the least elevation in the ground we were passing over my bearers bent very low under their monstrous weight of about one hundred and fifty pounds,—so very low in fact as on several occasions to allow their precious burden to drag and thump against the ground—but *nobody* grumbled.

At the start two slightly wounded men, who were yet able to carry their guns, accompanied us as a sort of self-constituted

guard, but presently one of these, unable to keep pace with the "Stonewall rangers," gradually dropped to the rear and was lost sight of; but the other remained until I had no further need of his services.

My bearers were not very talkative. Six of them carried at a time and the remaining two trudged along by my side in charge of the wounded guard. We had in fact proceeded full half a mile before a word was spoken by any one of them. Then the most frail looking man of the squad, who was one of the second pair of bearers, and consequently had the hardest place, suddenly wheezed out in a very hoarse tone of voice "Thunder and lightnin—you uns knowd I was ni gone with a cold and——" here his voice gave out entirely; but the change he wished was soon made and we pushed on again.

We were now out of sight of the advancing foe, and soon began to wonder why it was we could see nothing that looked like a Union line of battle, or even a Union flag. Bullets, coming from we knew not whom, continued to fly about, and ever and anon we would hear a thud and see some poor wounded man, who like ourselves was doing his best to get out of range, whirl about like a top, or throw up his arms and sink down to rise no more.

But we pressed on, and on, until at length there was not a man save my own party in sight, and I became satisfied that we had lost direction; otherwise we would long ere that have been in the open country. We had, in fact, moved entirely out of our proper line of retreat, and were now—this wounded soldier and myself—lost and alone in the woods with these eight able bodied men whom we had good reason to suppose were our deadly enemies.

I was very thankful to have even this wounded man with me. On looking up I saw that his features wore a troubled expression. My bearers, now for the first time, seemed inclined to rest, and I immediately ordered them to halt and lay down their burden for that purpose; earnestly hoping a squad of Unionists might meantime happen that way.

We had not rested more than a minute when three or four

shells, which seemed to be red hot, passed over us, causing some rather ludicrous "*ducking*" among those who were standing. Ludicrous, after it was all over, I mean, for at the time I felt exceedingly sober minded. One of these shells passed so near my own head as to almost take my breath away, and I felt come over me very suddenly, an irresistible desire to change from a sitting to a lying posture. Following close after the thunder of the discharge came a cloud of stifling powder smoke, writhing and twisting toward us as if it were some huge unearthly monster, intent on our destruction. As this enveloped and almost stifled us, I heard, not fifty yards distant, orders to reload, given in accents I had no desire to remain and listen to. We had run right up against a masked Confederate battery, and I expected as a matter of course the tables would now be turned—that the prisoners would become the captors and we (the guard and myself) be carried inside their lines. But to my surprise and delight I was the next moment borne hurriedly away in an opposite direction.

After moving out of range we followed the course of the shells fired by this battery, which went crashing through the trees to our right at a tremendous rate. About a quarter of a mile from the spot which had proven such an unsatisfactory resting place, we emerged into the open fields on which Hancock had formed his command for the attack. There I was joined by Private John H. Conklin of Co. A; and soon came upon Private Price, of Co. K, who had caught and was leading my horse.

On a sightly spot near the centre of this clearing, which I judged was from four to five hundred acres in extent, stood the Brown house, which early in the morning had been occupied as corps headquarters. There I found a detachment of the provost-guard, to whom I "turned in" the prisoners. There, too, was our corps medical director, who, after assisting me to a chair in the centre of a large room, the floor of which was almost covered with wounded officers, soon removed my heavy riding boot by two or three dexterous cuts with a wonderfully sharp knife; and then slitting the leg of my pants, thrust a finger in either end of the wound, discovered and removed the loose splinters of bone, and

directing an assistant to apply a bandage, turned away with the remark, "good for a sixty-day furlough," and gave his attention to a wounded staff officer who had just been brought in.

As soon as the bandage was applied I hobbled out of doors, and sat down on the piazza, which ran across the front of the house. This, too, was almost covered with wounded men. On my right lay a major of the line, delirious, and in the agonies of death. His body quivered, and his limbs twitched in a frightful manner, while in an excited but gradually failing voice he continually shouted orders and words of encouragement to his men, or hurled threats of defiance at the foe; as if his command had just scaled the works, and he was yet in the midst of that first bloody encounter where I doubt not he received his mortal hurt.

Above the woods in which the combatants were concealed, the smoke of battle hung like a pall; and even there where I sat, which was full a mile away from the contending lines, the air had a sulphurous taste. The roar of battle was incessant, and from left and front and right, wounded men poured in and formed an unbroken column which passed along a beaten track, in front of this house to a road that ran toward the general hospitals.

As I sat listlessly gazing on this weird scene, a corporal stepped up to me, and saluting, said, "I am one of the color guard of the 141st. Will you please let me have our flag? Unhesitatingly I drew it forth and handed it to him, and he went his way rejoicing. I afterward learned that his regiment was publicly reprimanded for losing it. If the little band who followed this flag to the farthest point of our advance were included in the order, a gross injustice was certainly done them.

Private Price, who was unable to handle a musket because of a wound received in a former battle, remained with me; and after I had rested a short time on the piazza, he helped me to mount, and we fell in with the motley column of wounded, and started for the field hospitals, which were yet a mile and a half distant.

As we passed from the clearing, through a gateway, to the main road which led into the woods again, I heard, in a familiar voice, a hearty "Well, Weygant, I was expecting you," and look-

ing up encountered the smiling face of Chaplain Joe Twichell, of the Excelsior Brigade. Chaplain T. was one of that not very numerous class of glorious good fellows who are always found watching for an opportunity to "do a good turn," spiritual or otherwise, to those in need. He was looking anxiously for the wounded men of his regiment, but had a word of praise and encouragement for all. His horse stood beside him, and his saddle-bags looked very much as if they contained something *in bottles*. If so it was for the exclusive use of such of the poor wounded boys of his regiment as he judged would be benefited by it. I had met him similarly engaged at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, and his kind greeting was most welcome. That afternoon he and Chaplain Acker of the 86th, called on me at the hospital, and offered to do anything in their power for the comfort of myself and comrades. And just here let me record the fact that during the bloody campaign of the Wilderness, the sick and wounded men of the 124th at the front had no more true or willing friend than this same Chaplain Acker. He appeared to know no difference between a member of the 86th and 124th—or if he did have a slight preference, it was in favor of the men from Orange County.

On arriving at the hospital I found that a vanguard of wounded Orange Blossoms had preceded me, and following close after came a score or more of others. Lieutenant Houston, of Co. D., came staggering in with bloated face, the blood running from his mouth and trickling from a hole in either cheek. He was one of the most brave, and had always been regarded as the *most* unassuming and quiet officer in the regiment. But now he could not talk if he would, for a bullet had passed through his face and his jaw was terribly shattered.

Then came Captain Benedict of the same company, borne on a stretcher—his swarthy complexion, which never faded in battle, now almost fair from loss of blood. He had been shot through the hips—the bullet entering one side and coming out at the other. There he lay as helpless as an infant; and it was the general opinion of those who saw him that he could not survive his inju-

ries. One of his brother officers, however, naively remarked "Oh no, old Whortleberry is too contrary to let a bullet kill him, he will come around, you will see;" and he was right. James Benedict's place as captain of his company "*D*," of which he was justly proud, was not to be declared vacant while the war lasted, and its first and only captain was yet to render his country much valuable service *in the field.*

About noon my pack-horse, laden with regimental headquarters traps, was brought up, and as the hospital tents were already crowded to overflowing, I had our field tent pitched, and started a small ward of my own.

The first person who came up after I had moved into it was Captain Wood, of Co. A. I had just stretched myself on my bed of boughs, and was trying to get my wounded limb in a comfortable position when I heard a slight scratch on the canvas at the opening of the tent, and looking up saw the captain's face, begrimed with powder yet wearing its usual smile. There was, however, something about its expression which told me he was suffering intensely, and as he sidled in I saw that he was nursing one of his arms as tenderly as if it were some *relative's* baby—for he was as yet a bachelor. A bullet had struck him in the forearm, just below the elbow, and had become wedged in between the bones in such a way that the surgeons, he said, had almost murdered him in fruitless efforts to remove it. When I asked him to lie down beside me he sank on the pine boughs as if there was no more strength left in him. My old company, the captain informed me, was badly cut up. Both the Gallow brothers had been wounded; Frank severely in the leg, while Charley had been shot through both arms, and was sitting on the ground by the surgeon's table, waiting his turn to have one of them amputated. Private Brownley had been killed early in the action and Corporal Arcularius too, he thought, for he had not been seen after they fell back to the earthworks.

About two P. M. I learned that Lieutenant Cormick, the commanding officer of F, which was now our color company, was walking about through the hospital inquiring after our wounded,

and I sent for him to come to my tent. In a few moments he appeared, and in answer to my inquiries as to whether the regiment had been relieved from the battle line, replied, "Oh no! I left the boys fighting, and come very near being shot getting to the rear. The fact is I ought to have gone back, and did start to do so, but the Major had ordered me away and I—I—had to obey him." Just then I noticed blood trickling from the brave fellow's sleeve, and on further inquiry learned that he had been wounded in the arm by a bullet. At this juncture one of our men, who had just arrived slightly wounded, came up, and seeing Lieutenant Cormick standing there—for the ends of my tent had been thrown open—expressed surprise, and said he would have sworn that he had gone to kingdom come. It appears that when the Lieutenant was wounded in the arm, he sat down on the ground, took off his coat, tore out one of the sleeves of his shirt and bandaged it; then, picking up a rifle, procured some ammunition from the box of a dead man, and taking position behind and almost directly under the colors, declared he would play the sharpshooter once more until he had made the score even with the Rebs. After firing several very deliberately aimed shots, he expressed himself as satisfied and returned to his post in rear of his little company. The next moment a shell exploded so near as to knock him completely off his feet. For several minutes he was unconscious, and it was supposed he was dead. (It was at this juncture that the man referred to lost a finger and started from the field.) But in a few moments the Lieutenant regained consciousness, and the Major gave orders that he be carried to the rear, and directed him in most emphatic terms to *remain* there. One of his sides was badly bruised from his hip to his shoulder, and two of his ribs were broken. But after being carried two or three hundred feet he got off the stretcher, sent his bearers to the front again, and made his way to the hospital unaided. At my request, or rather in compliance with my order, he lay down beside Captain Wood.

Presently a wounded man of Company E. came in and related with great gusto the particulars of the capture of the battle

flag of the 17th Louisiana by young Archibald Freeman, of *his* company. "The Rebs," said he, "had charged almost up to the works twice before, but this time they came clear up and planted their stars and bars on the other side of the works right opposite the Union flags. The Louisianians were facing our regiment and had thrust their standard in the earth directly opposite and not more than three feet from ours. But it did not float there more than a minute when Arch. Freeman, of my company, sprang on the works and as quick as a flash jerked up the traitor rag and was back in his place without getting a scratch—and, well now, you just ought to have heard our boys yell. The Rebs tried to get even by coming the same dodge on us and capturing our flag; but they ought to have known better than to attempt such a job, for we tumbled them back, completely riddled with bullets every time they came near it."

During the afternoon Lieutenant Mapes, of Co. B., appeared, slightly wounded in the head, and I then had with me at the hospital five of my ten company commanders. Just how many of the rank and file had arrived I was unable to learn; but it was very evident that the regiment at the front was growing decidedly weak in numbers.

During the forenoon it was exceedingly warm, but about one o'clock a light rain storm set in, cooling the air and refreshing the wounded—especially the poor fellows who yet lay scattered over the field. As evening approached the storm increased somewhat, and a strong but fitful breeze sprang up coming from the direction of the battle-field. It fanned the fever heated brows, but at the same time produced a most undesirable effect, by its wild freaks with the battle thunder, on the thousands of wounded gathered at the hospital. Large numbers of these sufferers, exhausted by several consecutive days and nights of forced wakefulness, had, in spite of their wounds, fallen asleep. At first the dull, heavy monotonous roar sank lower and yet lower, until it seemed there was at last a lull in the storm of death which since early morning had raged with unabated fury. So real appeared this lull in the dread storm of battle, that a dying man whis-

pered, "Thank God, the fighting for to-day at least, is ended." But the next moment it began to gather force again and swelled out louder and yet louder, coming rapidly nearer, until it seemed as if Milton's legions of darkness had espoused the cause of the Confederates and, armed with improved engines of war from the arsenals of the infernal regions, were hurling the entire Union army right back on the tents we were occupying; and hundreds of the wounded, startled from their sleep, sprang to their feet, and grasping whatever they could find, rushed out from under the canvas, ready to fight or flee. Those of us who had remained awake knew very well that it was but the action of the wind, and yet I found myself reaching for my sword, and with difficulty refrained from playing the fool by shouting for my horse. Then as the fierce blast, having spent its greatest force, sank apace, the roarings of mingled cannon peals, and rifle crash, and wild shouts of fierce combatants, seemed to recede again.

Comparative quiet was soon restored, but for several hours these mad phantom armies of the wind, borrowing the actual thunder of battle, went rushing back and forth, driving many a poor fellow nearly distracted. At length—about midnight—the fighting ceased and the wind, deprived of its ally, went whistling through the woods like a frightened boy, and we presently heard only the occasional crack of a rifle on the distant picket line, the shouts of the delirious, and the groans of the dying.

The wonderful eighteen hours' struggle had ended by the Confederates abandoning the impossible task of retaking the works Hancock's men had captured, and retiring from amid the literally piled up corpses of their slain to their inner lines.

But how fared it now with our Orange Blossoms yet at the front, very few of whom had, for seventy odd hours, eaten anything save a ration of hard bread, or slept to exceed a couple of hours? When, at midnight, the battle ended, Lieutenant Theodore M. Roberson, with twenty men of the 124th, was ordered out on picket, and the entire number remained on their posts, close up to and watching the enemy's line until daylight. Those who were left in the works partook of a midnight meal, to

appease the gnawings of hunger, after which two-thirds of them at a time were allowed to lie down beside their loaded weapons and rest.

During the night of the 12th, preparations were made for sending as many as possible of the wounded to the city of Fredericksburg; and at early daylight, on the morning of the 13th, a vast train of ambulances and army wagons came clattering up and went winding in and out among the white tents of our bullet-smitten city. These, as fast as they could be packed with the seriously wounded, moved off followed by a vast throng of the less severely injured who were able to walk.

At eight o'clock I had my horse saddled and brought to my tent, and gathering such articles as it was supposed we would need on our journey, I was assisted to mount—for so great was my dread of a long ride in an ambulance filled with wounded, I had resolved to attempt the journey on horseback. But the moment I lowered my wounded limb, so as to allow the foot to hang down, a peculiar sensation was produced. The foot seemed to be wonderfully heavy, or rather felt as if it was being pulled from the leg. But this difficulty was soon remedied by Private Price, who speedily manufactured a piece of shelter tent into a sling, which, being placed over my shoulder, and about my foot and ankle, formed a rest. Of this sling I could take a firm hold, and relieve my limb from the worst effects of the jar occasioned by the tramp of my horse.

When all was at length satisfactorily arranged, I bid adieu to such of my comrades as had not yet been packed in the train, and fell in with the departing column. Then hour after hour, we trudged on beneath the gradually increasing heat of the sun, along a hard rough road, which, notwithstanding the recent rain, soon sent up clouds of dust. As far as the eye could reach, looking forward or backward, this dusty highway was crowded with heavily laden canvas-covered wagons, and with pale, blood-stained, staggering men. Several times we passed by a small burial party digging a grave for the dead body of *some one* who had just breathed his last, in one of the ambulances, or more

likely in one of the springless wagons, which every few moments went clattering and bouncing along over bumps and in and out of gullies, jostling together the poor helpless beings, with which they were filled, and whose cries of agony as they passed were frequently appalling.

At every spring, well, and stream of water we came to, vast crowds were gathered bathing their wounds, and filling their canteens. These crowds were frequently so great that it was with no little difficulty, and only after considerable delay, that my attendant was able to procure for me fresh supplies of the fever-appeasing balm.

At length when so completely exhausted that I felt I must speedily dismount in order to save a fall from my horse, the spires of Fredericksburg suddenly loomed up near at hand, and an hour later I was lying, forgetful of all actual scenes, on a comfortable cot in one of the spacious dwellings of that city.

Early the next morning, I was surprised by a call from Bugler Ross, who informed me that his special charge, Colonel Cummins, was in the room directly above me. After breakfast I made my way up to the room where the Colonel was lying. He was quite weak, but in the best of spirits, and looking much stronger than I had expected to find him. The doctors however informed me that it would be some days yet, even under the most favorable circumstances, before he would be able to resume his journey northward.

In the course of our conversation, I told him of my ride from the front on horseback, and how that after a day's rest, I intended to resume my journey in the same manner. "You will never get over making an ass of yourself," said he, and added "you are a pretty looking subject to talk about such a thing—but I say, Weygant, have you any money? I have some and will divide with you." Fortunately I had with me all the money I had need of just then, but had the division he suggested been desirable, I am sure he would have insisted on my taking the larger part.

Colonel Cummins, though not without grave faults as a commander, had an unusually kind heart, and so far as money was

concerned, was a most liberal man. He could not look on a pale face, or a blood-stained garment without losing sight of self, and instinctively feeling for his pocketbook.

On the morning of the 15th we, according to programme, though my limb was much swollen, resumed our journey. We started at seven A. M., and reached Aquia Creek at four P. M., just as a steamboat was leaving the wharf. I have always believed that the captain mistook my silver leaves for stars, for on seeing me approach he instantly caused the engine of his craft to be reversed and backed up and took me on board. We reached Georgetown during the night, and at early daylight the next morning I procured an ambulance, and was taken to Prince St. Hospital, where I remained three days, during which a kind-hearted elderly lady—the matron—waited on me with all the tenderness of a mother. She had a cot placed in her sitting room, which she unhesitatingly gave up to me with the simple remark, "The other rooms are all full now and besides you will be much more comfortable here." Every morning I would find a bouquet of fresh flowers on a little stand at the head of my cot; books and papers were placed in reach, and every want was supplied, almost before it was made known. On the morning of the 19th, a furlough for which I had been anxiously waiting arrived, and I immediately began my preparations for a journey by rail to Old Orange.

We will now take up again the broken thread of our story proper and, uniting it, continue as best we may at so great a distance the record of the principal doings of the regiment—or rather of that small portion of it remaining at the front. The number of enlisted men present for duty on the morning of the 13th did not exceed one hundred and twenty, and during the day two of that number were shot while engaged altering with shovels, the captured works.

On the 14th, Birney's entire division was withdrawn to higher ground some thirty-five rods to the rear, and there set to throwing up a new line of works. This movement was observed by the enemy, who sent forward a small observing force to occupy the

abandoned works, whereupon the 86th and 124th were directed to advance and drive them out. Hastily forming in front of their new line, they dashed forward under Colonel Lansing, of the 86th, and speedily drove out the troublesome foe and recaptured the works. In this affair one man of the 124th was killed and three others wounded.

On the 15th the brigade, now under command of Colonel Eagan, of the 40th N. Y., (General Ward having been, for some cause unknown to those under him, relieved from command.) marched several miles to the right, and then back to the left again, where they went into position on a new line, with their right flank resting on the river Po. In this movement they were several times under fire, and had a brisk skirmish with a small body of Confederates, taking twenty-one prisoners. Several men of the brigade were seriously injured, but the 124th escaped unscathed. On this new position they threw up a line of works behind which they remained without further loss, or being again disturbed until the evening of the 17th, when the enemy made a sudden dash against them, but was easily repulsed and severely punished with but slight loss to the brigade—the 124th having one man wounded.

The losses of the Union army up to this date was, in round numbers, 35,000 men. That of the enemy, who had been generally on the defensive, and behind breastworks, may have been somewhat less. We refer, of course, to the losses in killed, wounded, and captured. There is always in severe campaigns like this, in addition to the losses in battle, a continual drain from sickness, equal to full one per cent a day. But this drain on the Union army was counterbalanced by the arrival of reinforcements.

Since the opening of the campaign, the 124th had either been actively engaged, or under fire so much of the time, that the men in writing home as late as the 18th, spoke of the battle which had been raging since the 4th of May. The following is a complete list of the losses in battle of the 124th at Spottsylvania.

CASUALTIES OF THE 124TH N. Y. AT SPOTTSYLVANIA COURT HOUSE.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL C. H. WEYGANT, *wounded.*

COMPANY A.

CAPT. CHARLES B. WOOD..... *Wounded*
SERGT. S. T. Rollings..... "
CORP. Robert C. Hunt..... "
CORP. Henry Arcularius.....*Killed*
Joseph Brownly..... "
Charles W. Gallow.....*Wounded*
Frank B Gallow..... "
John H. Warford..... "
William Carpenter..... "
William Saunders..... "
Richard Rollings..... "
Jabez Odell..... "
Robert Ashman..... "

COMPANY B.

LIEUT. WILLIAM E. MAPES.....*Wounded*
FIRST SERGT. C. A. Wheeler.....*Killed*
George Boon..... "
Samuel Sherman..... "
Samuel Babcock.....*Wounded*
Matthew Crawley..... "
Patrick Leach..... "
Andrew J. Messenger..... "
James Birdsall..... "
H. McShane..... "
Martin Everett..... "

COMPANY C.

CORP. William R. Owen.....*Killed*
John H. Finch.....*Wounded*
Chas. P. F. Fisher..... "
William H. H. Rhodes..... "

COMPANY D.

CAPT. JAMES W. BENEDICT.....*Wounded*
LIEUT. JOHN W. HOUSTON..... "
SERGT. William E. Hyatt.....*Killed*
David D. Barrett..... "
John C. Degraw.....*Wounded*
William H. Gordon..... "
Simeon Garrison..... "
Carl G. Hoofman..... "
Joseph Quackenbush..... "
Oscar S. Weymer..... "
W. H. Morgan..... "

COMPANY E.

CORP. Adam H. Miller.....*Killed*
CORP. William H. Howell..... "
John J. Scott..... "
Lewis W. Baxter..... "
Henry M. Howell.....*Wounded*
Simeon Wheat..... "
Horace H. Wheeler..... "
Archibald Freeman..... "

COMPANY F.

LIEUT. EDWARD J. CARMICK....*Wounded*
SERGT. Horace Hammond..... "
John S. Schofield..... "
Erastus Peck..... "
Sanford L. Gordon.....*Killed*

COMPANY G.

Lewis T. Shultz.....*Wounded*
Nathan W. Parker..... "
Francis McMahon..... "

COMPANY H.

SERGT. Chas. W. Tindall.....*Captured*
SERGT. George Butters..... "
CORP. William H. Brown.....*Wounded*

COMPANY I.

FIRST SERGT. A. P. Millspaugh..*Wounded*
Jeduthan Millspaugh..... "
William Edgar.....*Killed*

COMPANY K.

SERGT. Wood T. Ogden.....*Wounded*
CORP. John C. Vermilyea..... "
Isaac Kanoff..... "
John Studor..... "
William H. Falkner.....*Killed*

BRIG. COLOR-BEARER—
Norman A. Sly, of D ....*Wounded*

SERGT.-MAJOR T. G. Mabie..... "

Total Casualties.....69

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM SPOTTSYLVANIA TO PETERSBURG.

FOR several days after the battle of May 12th, the Union army seems to have been kept busy, manœuvering and marching up and down, in quest of some weak point in the enemy's defences at Spottsylvania; but none was found, and on the morning of the 18th, General Grant determined on another direct assault. Hancock's command, strengthened by Tyler's fresh and powerful division of foot artillerists—which had just arrived from the fortifications about Washington—was designated to take the lead in this desperate undertaking. At the appointed time the advance, composed of the divisions of Gibbon and Barlow, swept forward in gallant style through the woods in front of the works captured on the 12th. But they soon brought up against a formidable abatis, and were speedily repulsed with such terrible loss, that it was deemed expedient to withdraw the entire force, instead of sending forward the supporting lines. The 124th, as it stood in the second line waiting for and expecting orders to advance, had one man severely wounded by a stray bullet that passed over Barlow's men.

As soon as it was known that Hancock's assault had proved a failure, preparations were made for another grand turning movement. An order was issued directing Mead's trains to be parked on the Fredericksburg road; and Tyler's Division was sent thither to guard them. Birney's command now moved back a considerable distance from the main line, and encamped near the house of one Langdon.

At daybreak on the 19th, Eagan's brigade moved about a mile to the rear, and encamped near the Anderson house. There the men of the 124th who, for two weeks, had scarcely

been out of range of the enemy's bullets, rested until about five P. M., when they were aroused by the sound of heavy firing, off to their rear—in the direction of the Fredericksburg road, on which it was known the trains were parked.

Half an hour later a mounted orderly, dashing through their camp, reined up in front of brigade headquarters, and the next moment the assembly was sounded. Hurriedly grasping their guns, canteens, and haversacks, and leaving tents standing and knapsacks strewn about, they hurried into line, which was scarcely formed ere the brigade bugler *tooted* the forward, and the column started on a double-quick toward the scene of action. On the way they were joined by a brigade from the 5th Corps, and the two columns marching side and side quickened their pace to a run, dashed through the wagon park and soon reached Tyler's battle line, which, though terribly cut up, was not only holding its own but had just repulsed a most determined assault of the foe, whose broken and straggling forces could be seen scampering out of range. Without a moment's delay the veterans hurried into line, and moving over Tyler's exhausted command, rushed forward with wild shouts after the flying foe, whom they pursued several miles. And when at length darkness put an end to the wild chase, the pursuers about faced and retraced their steps, bringing in with them upwards of five hundred prisoners. The 124th's share of this human plunder consisted of two officers and thirty-one enlisted men, while the wounding of Private Vradenburgh, of Co. G., was their only casualty.

Swinton's account of this affair reads as follows: "Ewell, swept across the Ny, seized that important road, and attempted to capture a wagon train upon it, when he was stoutly resisted by Tyler and his artillerists. These had never been under fire before, but they fought with the coolness and steadiness of veterans of the Second and Fifth corps, who came to their assistance, but not until after Ewell had been repulsed. They did not fight with the caution of the veterans, and lost heavily. They and their gallant leader have the honor of repulsing Ewell; and they share with others in the credit of scattering the foe, in the woods

up the valley of the Ny and capturing several hundred of them. By this attack Grant's flanking movement was disturbed and temporarily checked, but it was resumed on the following night."

Eagan's Brigade bivouacked that night near the scene of Tyler's victory, and at daylight on the 20th returned to the Anderson Plantation where they had so unceremoniously left their traps and tents some twelve hours before. Here the Orange Blossoms, after scouring their weapons, spent the day very pleasantly lounging about on the grass, writing letters home, and talking over the many changes and never to be forgotten events of the preceding sixteen days.

That evening the contemplated movement from Spottsylvania was begun in earnest—Hancock's corps leading the infantry advance. "At dark on the evening of the 20th," reads Eagan's official report—"the brigade moved to the left, crossing the Fredericksburg and Richmond R. R., near Gainey's station, passing through Bowling Green and halting for dinner on the plantation of the Confederate Colonel Fontleroy. The march was then continued, crossing the Mattapony River at Milford station and halting for the night two miles beyond." Here, before lying down to rest, the brigade covered its front with a light line of earthworks.

On the morning of the 22d Birney's entire command, which now consisted of his own and Mott's divisions, moved forward in line of battle to the house of one Coleman, where they spent the greater part of the day erecting a rather elaborate line of works. When these were completed a small reconnoitering party was sent out, which soon returned and reported that the enemy's picket line was close at hand; whereupon Colonel Eagan was directed to make a reconnoissance in force, to find out if possible the strength and exact whereabouts of the enemy. He took with him the 40th N. Y., 3d Maine, and 99th Penn., and after an absence of several hours, returned with a solitary woe-be-gone dismounted Confederate cavalryman. "I advanced," said the Colonel to General Birney, "as far as Polecat Station, sending out small squads in every direction. We captured the enemy's

outposts and main body—horse foot and dragoons. Not a man escaped—and *here it is*,"—pointing to the prisoner referred to.

About nine A. M. on the 23d the advance was resumed toward where the North Anna is crossed by the Chesterfield bridge. Eagan's brigade was on the lead, and at one P. M. came in sight of the bridge, which unfortunately was not only covered by earthworks, but these works appeared to be strongly manned. A halt was now ordered, and the men set to throwing up a light line of earthworks. But at five o'clock labor on these ceased, and preparations were made for an assault. The storming party consisted of picked regiments from the brigades of Pierce and Eagan.

"About a quarter of a mile ahead of us," says Captain Travis, "ran the North Anna. From and at right angles with our line, as it was formed for the charge, ran a road straight down to the river. The right of our consolidated regiment (the 86th and 124th, now commanded by Major Stafford,*) rested on this road. On our right were the Maine regiments; and we were joined on the left by the 40th N. Y. At the bridge were two redoubts, each containing two guns, and heavily manned with infantry. In front of these ran a well filled line of rifle trenches. The advance of our regiment and the 40th N. Y. was directed against the trenches and redoubts on the left of the bridge. About half past five the order to start was given and we rushed down the slope, and over the plain, on the run; encountering as we went one of the most savage fires of shell and bullets I had ever experienced. But the men only rushed on all the faster. We were only a few moments crossing the flats but left strewn along our route nearly one-fifth of the charging line. Just before we reached the redoubts the rebels became satisfied they could not hold us back, and hur-

* After the battle of Spottsylvania the regiment was so small that it was found necessary to consolidate the men for field duty into five, and soon into three companies. And for the same reason and purposes the regiments of the brigade were temporarily consolidated—the 86th and 124th acting together; first under Lieut. Col. Lansing, and then under Major Stafford, both of the 86th. This union, which lasted until they settled down in camp in front of Petersburg, strengthened the already strong ties existing between the two commands; and the bond of fellowship formed in camp and on the march, was sealed amid the smoke and thunder of battle where their valiant dead fell side by side.

ried their guns over the bridge; and a moment later their entire force broke and fled. But leaping the ditch and scaling the works, we managed to reach this bridge in time to cut off and capture a considerable number of the hindermost. Of these the boys of the 124th scooped in eight, but we left not a few of our number stretched on the plain."

Swinton's account of this affair reads as follows: "Hancock's point of passage was the Chesterfield or Couty Bridge, a mile above the railroad crossing of the North Anna. Here the Confederates had constructed a *tete-de-pont* on a tongue of land formed by Long Creek and North Anna, covering the bridge. On the north side was an extended redan with a wet ditch in front, the gorge being commanded by rifle trenches in the rear. On the Southern bank, which dominates the Northern, was a similar work. The tongue of land to be overpast in carrying this bridge head was a bare and barren plain several hundred yards in width, which it turned out was held by a part of McLaw's division of Longstreet's corps. Birney's division of Hancock's corps was assigned the duty of carrying the work and bridge. To cover the storming party Colonel Tidball, chief of artillery of the corps, placed in position three sections, which replied with effect to the enemy's fire. An hour before sundown the assault was made by the brigades of Pierce and Eagan, that under a heavy fire swept across the open plain at double-quick. As the menacing line approached close to the work the garrison fled precipitately, and the men making a foothold in the parapet with their bayonets clambered over it and planted their colors on the redoubt. Thirty men of the defending force, unable to escape, were captured in the ditch. The affair was exceedingly spirited and cost less than a hundred and fifty men. The enemy made several attempts to burn the bridge during the night, but these were prevented by the vigilance and good behavior of the troops."

The 124th spent the night in the redan from which it had helped to expel the foe. When day dawned again it was discovered that the enemy had abandoned the works on the opposite bank of the stream, and Hancock's command began to cross.

The 86th and 124th were among the first to pass over the bridge, and on reaching the Southern shore were deployed as skirmishers and advanced. They soon encountered the Confederate pickets and speedily drove them back nearly a mile, where an order to halt reached them. In this skirmish several more of the Orange Blossoms were disabled. At midnight they were relieved, and returned to the main line near the river.

The Confederates' line of works just beyond the North Anna, were found to be so strong that the commander-in-chief wisely concluded it would be easier to go around than over them. He accordingly, during the night of the 26th, withdrew his entire army to the south side of the river. There Hancock's corps took up a strong position in which it remained until the other corps were well on their way toward the fords of the Pamunkey River.

On the 27th Hancock cautiously withdrew, moved off after the others, and on the 28th crossed the Pamunkey at Nelson' Ford and rejoined the main army on the southern banks of that river. Here again the Unionists found themselves confronted by the wily foe, who was engaged strengthening an already formidable line of works along the Talapottomy Creek.

Birney's command spent the afternoon of the 28th and morning of the 29th erecting a line of works at the Elliot House near the river. But on the evening of the 29th moved forward to the support of Barlow's division which attacked and after a short but spirited engagement drove the enemy from a line of advance rifle pits into his main works; in front of which Hancock's entire command deployed and set to work erecting a corresponding line of defences. This occupied their attention for two days—meantime, though neither side advanced, a large amount of ammunition was expended. The picket lines were but a few rods apart and the videttes kept up a deadly fire. The artillery too, ever and anon opened most furiously from the opposing heights; and worse and more dreaded than all else were the sharpshooters' bullets which kept picking off a man, first here and then there, all over the camp. They were bloody days in which, though no

general engagement took place, many names were added to the death rolls of the Second Corps.

On the afternoon of the 30th, Major Murray was directed to send out to a given point several hundred feet in front of that portion of the line where the 124th was lying, a couple of men under a competent officer to stake out a new line for earthworks which were to be erected that night. The Major selected for leader of this desperate undertaking Captain Crist, of Company H. The brave old Captain moved resolutely forward in plain sight of the deadly sharpshooters, and with unusual coolness began the task assigned him, but before it was half completed his dead body instead of a stake marked the prolongation of the line on which the contemplated works were to be erected. At ten P. M. his corpse was borne back a short distance, where it was incased in a cracker-box coffin; and in the gloom of night a little band of comrades, who had learned to love and esteem him, amid scenes which tried men's souls, knelt about his open grave, while Sergeant Shultz of G.—who though yet suffering from wounds received at Chancellorsville had returned to duty—offered a prayer. But the petition was heard only by the God of battles to whom it was addressed, for just then, (says an eye witness) one of those terrible night scares took place on the picket lines in which each side imagined that the other was advancing, and the batteries all along that portion of the works adding their thunder peals to the rattle of the riflery, completely drowned the sergeant's voice.

Captain Travis writing of this weird burial scene, says, "It was the most solemn thing I ever witnessed, and was done amid the thunder of artillery and rattle of musketry—a fit burial for so noble a man. We miss him in the regiment, for he was a kind friend, a noble soldier, and a man whose whole soul was wrapped up in his country's cause."

Major Murray, writing a few hours after the captain fell, bears similar testimony of his worth, "I regret," he says, "to have to tell you that Captain Crist is dead. He was shot through the breast and died immediately. He is our only loss to-day, but it has made all our hearts sick. A braver or better man never lived,

or one more thoroughly determined to do his duty faithfully. We are making arrangements to bury him. He had just gone out and was showing a man where to set a post as a basis for our works. I had been watching him and admiring the noble example he set the men, and was about to turn around when I saw him fall. God knows our hearts are heavy to-night over his loss."

I have said that these were bloody days. They were days too of privation and great suffering to others than the wounded. Major Murray, writes in the same letter from which the above is quoted, "This is the first time in my life that I have ever really suffered from hunger. We had drawn nothing for seven days, and I was almost used up. Roast corn, and coffee without sugar has been our daily meals for two days, until this evening, when the train that went to Port Royal for supplies came up. I never relished anything better than some boiled beef, hardtack and coffee we had to-night."

At about the time that Captain Crist was buried, Private Matthew Babcock of Co. B. was wounded in the hand. No other casualties are reported on that date.

On the afternoon of June 1st, Lieutenant Charles Stewart of Co. I. with a detail of ten enlisted men from the 124th and an equal number from the 86th was sent out for a tour of duty on the picket line. That night Hancock's command started for Cold Harbor, several miles to the left. The pickets were of necessity left for a time to cover the movement. And before they could be withdrawn, the enemy discovered what had taken place, threw a force around to their rear; closed in on them and captured a considerable number; including Lieutenant Stewart and six enlisted men of the 124th.

The first scene in the bloody battle of Cold Harbor was enacted on the part of the Unionists by the Sixth Corps, and portions of the 10th and 18th Corps which had just joined the Grand Army—or rather were joining it, for they were thrown into action as fast as they arrived on the field. It resulted in the carrying of the enemy's first line of works, the killing or disabling of about five hundred of his men, and the capture of six hundred prisoners,

at a cost to the two Union corps of upwards of two thousand men, killed and wounded.

In the formation of the Union army for the principal assault which took place on the 3d of June, the Second Corps formed the left of the line; but this time Birney's command was in reserve, and once more the 124th, as at the battle of Fredericksburg, were lookers on. They saw the veterans of the *old* Second Corps (Barlow and Gibbon's Divisions) make that grand charge in which they drove the enemy from his works and planted *their* standards where his had been. They saw the several hundred prisoners taken, hurried over the captured works and across the plain to the Union rear. They heard the thunder of the captured cannon which had been turned upon the foe. And then they saw these gallant men driven back by the reinforced Confederates who, though able to regain the shelter of their works and the cannon they had lost, could do no more; for Barlow's men halted and reformed within fifty yards of the works they had won and lost; and there, while one half kept up such a fire as caused the enemy to remain crouched down out of sight, the others speedily covered their front with earthworks, and established a line from which they could not be driven.

This assault, extended along Grant's entire front, was made between four and five o'clock in the morning, and resulted in no more substantial gains than the capture of a few hundred prisoners; while, according to Greeley, "Twenty minutes after the first shot was fired fully ten thousand of our men were stretched writhing on the sod or still and calm in death."

The battle closed with the Union front advanced in several places; and a night attack made by the Confederates was repulsed at every point. The next day a division of the enemy was hurled against what appeared to be a weak part of the Union line; but this assault also was easily repulsed.

Offensive operations were now suspended and for several days the Union army was armed with picks and shovels, instead of rifles and muskets. And huge works loomed up here and there, and trenches began to reach out toward the opposing lines. On

the 4th of June while this work was in progress, Corporal Andrew Jones of G. and Private William J. Miles of D. were wounded; for while all else remained comparatively quiet, the whistle and thud of the sharpshooter's bullet continued ever and anon to relieve a man from duty.

At the end of a week picks and shovels were laid aside, and preparations made for a change of base. General Grant had resolved to transfer his army, by a bold and rapid movement, to the banks of the James.

On the evening of the 12th Hancock's corps, which had again been chosen to lead, was set in motion, and on the 14th, at the end of a fifty-five mile march, reached Wilcox Landing and were speedily transferred by steamboats in waiting, to Wind Mill Point, on the southern shore of the James.

At half past ten A. M. on the 15th the advance was resumed, and Birney's command led the column down the Prince George Court House road, at a rapid gait, toward Petersburg. After a march of fourteen miles, made in four and a half hours, and when within six miles of the city, they changed direction to the right, without slacking their pace, and at the expiration of two hours came to what was called Old Court House. Here they changed direction to the left and again moved toward Petersburg. Heavy firing was in progress ahead of them, but it had almost ceased, when at eight P. M., after a days march of thirty miles, they brought up against, and lay down to rest behind a line of works, which had just before dark been carried by General Smith's command. Smith's troops came by another route, arriving there during the afternoon, and for several hours had been successfully forcing back the Confederate advance.

"At daylight on the morning of the 16th," reads Eagan's brigade report—"the enemy opened upon us with their batteries, killing and wounding a considerable number of the brigade, which was at once formed, and an assailing column, consisting of the 17th Maine and 20th Ind., was ordered to charge and take the enemy's works in our front. The advance was made but the position being one of great strength, and held by a large force,

it was found impossible to take it. The line was reformed and a second attempt with a larger force was made, but that also proved unsuccessful."

In this last advance Lieutenant Benjamin of G was slightly wounded. Here too Colonel Eagan was severely wounded, and the command of the brigade passed to Colonel Madill, of the 141st Penn. Volunteers. During the afternoon the brigade changed position several times, but did not become actually engaged, though heavy fighting was continually going on all about them. Late in the evening, Private Judson P. Lopton of H. was wounded in the arm by a stray bullet.

On the morning of the 18th a general assault was ordered, but when the skirmish line advanced it was discovered that the enemy had withdrawn to an inner and stronger line, and the main assault was deferred. But a portion of Madill's brigade consisting in part of the 124th, advanced to within two hundred yards of the enemy's new line and entrenched themselves. Here Edward Hunter of H. was mortally wounded. About noon Maj. Gen. Birney, then temporarily in command of the corps, ordered forward Gibbon's division, but it was repulsed. At six P. M. a general assault by the corps was made with like results.

In this last assault Madill's command suffered terribly—losing nearly two hundred men in killed and wounded. The 124th which advanced with but eighty-two muskets, lost one of its best officers, the gallant Captain William H. Jackson killed, and had eight enlisted men, wounded—several of them mortally.

Captain Jackson was a general favorite in the regiment, and the idol of his gallant company. Brave in battle, courteous in camp, always at his post when wanted, never obtrusive or complaining, and ever willing, competent, and ready to perform all just duty required of him, he had long been pointed to by his superiors, as a model soldier, and looked upon by those under him, as one whose example was at all times worthy of imitation. His loss was deeply mourned by all, but especially by the little band of surviving veterans of Company K., every one of whom, though their eyes had long been dry, shed bitter tears as they

carried his lifeless body back to the roadside, dug his grave beneath a massive oak, and buried him from their sight; and then lingered to carve his revered name on a neat board, with which to mark his temporary resting place.

About nine o'clock P. M. the brigade moved up to within short range of the enemy's position and spent the night throwing up a strong line of earthworks, behind which they remained until the night of the 20th. While here Private William A. Lamereaux of E. was wounded in the side.

At eleven P. M. on the 20th the brigade was relieved by a division of colored troops from the Ninth Corps; after which they moved about one and a half miles to the rear and lay down, out of harm's way, to rest for the night.

On the 21st the brigade, starting at nine A. M., moved slowly toward the left, and after several halts took a new position about three P. M. on the left side of the Jerusalem Plank Road. After remaining there about two hours they advanced to the front line and relieved a brigade there posted.

"On the morning of the 22st,"—says John E. Kidd of Co. H.—"I was one of the detail for picket taken from the 124th. Every thing was quiet along our picket line until about noon, when we were ordered to advance. A battle line followed us. The enemy's pickets fell back as we advanced for a short distance, when suddenly a heavy body of Confederate infantry appeared charging at a double-quick around our flank. They soon routed our battle line taking a large number of prisoners. The only 124th man captured was John Tompkins, of Co. C."

From the 23d to the 29th of June the brigade was moved almost daily, but did not become actively engaged. On the 30th the 124th received orders to lay out a camp and put up tents in a piece of woods a few yards in rear of the main line of newly constructed Union works.

The casualties of the regiment from the day it moved out of the main line at Spottsylvania, until it settled down on the main line in front of Petersburg, were as follows:

CASUALTIES OF THE 124TH, IN KILLED, WOUNDED AND CAPTURED FROM MAY 18 TO JUNE 22, 1864.

AT SPOTTSYLVANIA, MAY, 18 AND 19.

Private D. F. Raymond,	Co.	D	Wounded.
" J. Vradenburgh,	"	G	"

AT NORTH ANNA, MAY 23 AND 24.

Sergt. James A. Smith,	Co.	I	Wounded.
Corp. Henry R. Mayette,	"	K	"
Private Gabriel Colby,	"	K	"
" Joseph Point,	"	K	"
" Samuel Potter,	"	A	Killed.
" Daniel Ackerman,	"	A	Wounded.
" Daniel Smith,	"	G	"

AT TALAPOTTOMY CREEK, MAY 30 AND JUNE 1.

Capt. David Crist,	Co.	H	Killed.
Lieut. Charles Stewart,	"	I	Captured.
Sergt. Duncan W. Boyd,	"	C	Wounded and Captured.
" James Sisco,	"	F	" "
Private Matthew Babcock,	"	B	Wounded.
" Frederick Dezendorf,	"	C	Captured.
" James Crist,	"	H	"
" Patrick Cuneen,	"	K	"
" Samuel V. Tidd,	"	K	"

AT COLD HARBOR, JUNE 4.

Corp. G. R. Fitzgerald,	Co.	G	Wounded.
Private William J. Miles,	"	D	"

IN FRONT OF PETERSBURG, JUNE 16 TO 22.

Capt. William A. Jackson,	Co.	K	Killed.
Lieut. William H. Benjamin,	"	G	Wounded.
Sergt. Peter Rose,	"	A	"
Sergt. Watson W. Ritch,	"	K	"
Corp. Andrew Jones,	"	G	"
Corp. H. H. Montross,	"	B	"
Private John Tompkins,	"	C	Captured.
" Thomas P. Powell,	"	D	Wounded.
" W. A. Lamereaux,	"	E	"
" James Merritt,	"	B	"
" John Eckert,	"	B	"
" Edward Hunter,	"	H	"
" Judson B. Lupton,	"	H	"
" Patrick Kean,	"	I	"
Musician, Charles W. Bodle,	"	A	"

CHAPTER XVIII.

In front of Petersburg—Strawberry Plains—Deep Bottom.

ON the 20th day of June, 1864, I had recovered from my wounds so far as to be able to throw aside my crutches, and on the first day of July following left Newburgh for the front. My journal shows that my baggage, on this return trip, consisted of a regulation sabre, a contraband, a valise and an overcoat; and that at seven o'clock on the morning of "The ever glorious Fourth," I was wandering about an indescribable place called City Point, searching for some sort—any sort—of a conveyance to take me to the regiment, which I had learned was lying *somewhere* in front of Petersburg, twelve miles distant.

I had been on my feet more than I ought during the previous twenty-four hours, and consequently found my locomoting apparatus somewhat unreliable, and good for but a few rods at a time. Once at the hospital it would, I imagined, be a very easy matter to procure an ambulance; but unfortunately the hospitals were two miles away, and how to get that distance was a question I was for a time unable to answer satisfactorily.

Presently a terrible clattering, coming from the midst of an immense and approaching cloud of pulverized Virginia mud, conveyed intelligence that the advance wagons of a long train, after supplies, had arrived. Now, thought I, this weighty matter of transportation is as good as solved; and directing the contraband to take my valise to the side of the road—for the dust was so thick I could see but a short distance—I sat down on it, to watch for a wagon marked with a diamond or a clover-leaf, (diamonds and clover-leaves were the shapes of the badges worn by the men, and painted on the wagons of our division,) but none passed. At length I was informed that the depot from which

the Second Corps drew its supplies, was several miles from City Point.

Half an hour later a canvas covered wagon belonging to the Sanitary Commission drove past, from the opposite direction, and on hailing the driver I learned that he was bound to the City Point general hospitals, and from there to within a short distance of Second Corps headquarters. A moment later I was under the canvas, seated on a bale of blankets, and had my baggage—negro included—stowed away directly in front of me.

This conveyance, like the regular army wagons, had no springs, and was drawn by four mules. As soon as we were fairly seated, the driver whipped up his team, and off we started. The road was quite rough, but we got along very nicely for a short distance, when all of a sudden down went the forward wheels of the wagon into a deep hole, and away went I head foremost over the negro against the front boards—"WHO-O-O, GIT,"—shouted the mule lout, from the side of the road, and the next instant out went the forward wheels and down went the hind ones, and away I went back again, with the blankets on top of me, instead of my being on top of them. Fortunately I received no other injury from my tumblings than a slight strain of my recently wounded limb.

The contraband was less fortunate than myself, for the valise had in some manner come in contact with his nose, with such force as to completely flatten it—his nose I mean. But he was a rather plucky individual, and after righting himself up, and snorting and spitting blood a few moments, gave vent to his wounded feelings with the exclamation, "Golly! golly! massa, as true as de good Lord lubs us dat was wus nor a secesh cabry charge."

The heat was intense, and the farther we went the deeper the dust became. I had often heard of very dusty roads and could call to mind many a dusty march, but had no recollection of having heard of or seen any thing worth mentioning, compared with what we that day experienced. A mile from the Point it lay on the road so deep, that the mules seemed to be swimming in it.

How the driver managed to find his way was a mystery to me, for the air was so heavily freighted with it that I frequently found it difficult to determine by the use of my eyes whether my darkey had been jounced out of the wagon, or was yet there with me.

In about an hour (it seemed twenty-four hours) we turned from the road into the fields, where the dust was only three or four inches deep, and presently halted. The driver now informed me that we were at the General Hospitals, and that as soon as his mules could eat their oats he would be ready to resume his journey—adding very significantly, "If you don't find a more agreeable coach, I would be glad of your company the rest of the way out." I had not been able to determine whether he was old or young but supposed all along that he was a colored man, but now his language and accent satisfied me that he was white. His remarks, however, seemed to be directed to the darkey, by which I am inclined to think he took the darkey to be me, and must of course have taken me to be the darkey.

For several minutes after we alighted I was unable to discover anything that looked like hospital tents, but after proceeding a short distance in a direction the driver had indicated, we emerged from the most dense part of the cloud, and presently saw stretching out before us a vast city of tents, with numerous squares and long broad streets, at the head of nearly every one of which floated a yellow flag. In the centre of each of these flags was a badge, telling the passing soldiers to what corps and division the inmates of the tents on that street belonged. The flag also indicated that the particular tent in front of which it was planted was the headquarters of the surgeon in charge.

I was but a few moments finding the wards containing the men from our division, and after spending a short time with such members of the 124th as I saw there, made my way to the quarters of the surgeon in chief, and applied for an ambulance. The surgeon, to my surprise, informed me that he had not seen or heard of an ambulance for two days, and that the sick during that time had been brought back in army wagons. We returned

very reluctantly to the sanitary commission wagon, and found the accommodating driver just ready to start.

About two miles beyond the hospitals, we had the good fortune to overtake an empty ambulance belonging to our brigade, on its way to camp. Bidding the sanitary driver good day I hurriedly transferred myself and traps to this ambulance, in which we rode very comfortably for about three miles, when we came upon our brigade baggage train which was filing from the road and going into park in a strip of woods about a quarter of a mile away. We drove over to the woods and there found Quartermaster Ellis Post, and his assistants—also my horses and hostler.

The Quartermaster had a tent pitched for me, and after removing all I could of the dust, partaking of a soldier's meal, and enjoying a short rest, I procured a guide, and continued my journey on horseback. On the way we passed the grave of Captain Jackson, and a little farther on came to our division field hospital, in which I found several members of the 124th. Among this number was Major Murray, who had been there several days, under treatment for fever. There, too, I found Lieutenant Crissey of my old company, who had recently been relieved from detached service at Hart's Island, and returned to duty with the regiment. But his term of active service was about to close, for he was very near death's door. His face was bloated and his eyes swollen shut. I had not seen him previous to that time for nearly a year, and never saw him afterward.

At five P. M. we reached our brigade camps and found the 124th quite pleasantly situated in the shade of a grove of pines, where they had been lying for several days. On approaching near enough to see the dingy shelter tents in among the trees, I heard the shrill notes of a fife, accompanied by the tappings of a single drum; and galloping forward my eyes rested on a sight I shall never forget. Captain Travis, who of the officers present for duty, at the commencement of the campaign stood the seventh in rank, was now in command, and was holding, in honor of the day, what was intended to be a dress parade. The regiment had not been assembled for that purpose during the cam-

paign; the last previous dress parade having been held at Culpepper just two months and two days before, on which occasion the line consisted of upwards of three hundred and fifty cleanly clad and fresh looking men. Now there stood, drawn up before me, less than a hundred ragged, dirty, tired looking veterans, that was my regiment—all that was left fit for duty of the fighting men of the Orange Blossoms. In the centre of their line floated the new and pretty flag which had been sent them from the ladies of Orange, just before the campaign opened. Yes, it was new and beautiful still, though its stripes were rent with shell, its field riddled with bullets, and its splintered staff wound with twine. Every star was there and it was yet borne aloft by a noble son of Orange County whose proud face spoke volumes as, lowering and then lifting it again, at my approach, and watching my questioning look as I glanced up and down the line, he murmured louder than he thought—"gone—gone, but the old flag yet floats over what is left of us." Yes, the men were ragged, and dirty too, but they were a band of battle-tried veterans than which the armies of the United States contained none more noble or brave.

From the 4th to the 24th of July, the men of the 124th spent every third day on the picket lines, and were kept busy more than half of the remaining time tearing down the old and building new earthworks. During this period there were no engagements or even serious skirmishes along our immediate front, but the unpleasant sound of a passing shell or the whistle of a stray bullet frequently greeted our ears, and every little while, day and night, a lifeless body or a wounded man would be carried through our camp, from the picket trenches, main line, or fatigue parties at work in front.

A few extracts from the diary of an enlisted man of the regiment will perhaps give the reader some interesting facts regarding soldier life during that period, in front of Petersburg.

"*July* 5.—This morning the regiment broke camp and moved out to the main breastworks, in which we have spent the day, under arms.

"*July* 6.—Returned to our old camp this morning and rested until four o'clock when an inspection was held.

"*July* 7.—A day of rest.

"*July* 8.—I went on picket at four P. M.—a large detail from the regiment went on fatigue this morning.

"*July* 9.—Returned from picket at four P. M.—Capt. Bell of the 20th Indiana, who had charge of a portion of our brigade fatigue party last night, was killed by a piece of shell while superintending work on a fort a short distance from our camp.

"*July* 10.—At eleven o'clock last night we were all routed up and ordered to prepare for a march, and just before midnight started off. At daybreak we brought up in the deserted camps of the Sixth Corps which, rumor says, has been sent to Washington. We pitched our tents there, in rear of the main line of works. But about noon, just as we had finished cleaning up our new camp, orders came to strike tents and return to our old camp, which we reached about three o'clock P. M.

"*July* 11.—On our return to this camp we found, that during our absence, all our tent poles had been carried off, and we have spent the day hunting up new ones, and once more putting our camp in order.

"*July* 12.—We spent all last night tearing down old earthworks, and this morning moved back a short distance from where we had been working and have spent the day in the open fields.

"*July* 13.—Moved to the right about a mile and a half this morning, and have spent the day laying out a new camp in another piece of woods.

"*July* 14.—Spent last night on fatigue duty.

"*July* 15.—On fatigue duty again last night.

"*July* 16.—In camp.

"*July* 17.—Sunday. This has been the most quiet day we have experienced since we left Culpepper—our Chaplain and the Chaplain of the 86th held a union service which was well attended.

"*July* 18.—On picket.

"*July* 19.—Returned from picket at four P. M. It had rained

hard all day. About two-thirds of the boys are on fatigue duty.

"*July* 20.—About half the regiment is on picket—the rest in camp.

"*July* 21.—Boys returned from picket at four P. M. and in the evening had another dress parade.

"*July* 22.—All hands on fatigue.

"*July* 23.—All hands in camp.

"*July* 24.—We all went on fatigue at half past four o'clock this morning and did not get back until eight in the evening. We are getting very tired of the pick and shovel business. It is said that since we came here Hancock's men have torn down over twenty miles of old works. And we have built the Lord only knows how many miles of new. During the past month, our old division commander Major General D. B. Birney has been assigned to the command of the Tenth Corps. The veterans of the "Old Third" have been consolidated into one division under General Mott, and our brigade which has lost the 3d Maine, and 141st Pa., but to which the 73d N. Y. and 17th Me. have been added, has received a new and permanent commander in the person of General de Trobriand."

On the 25th of June the 48th Penn. of Burnside's corps—a regiment which had been recruited in the mining districts, began a secret mining operation, the ultimate object of which was the destruction of one of the most powerful of the enemy's forts. On the 23d day of July the officer in charge of this work reported that the mine was ready for use. It was hoped that the Union troops might be able to make their way through the opening to be made in the enemy's line by the destruction of this fort, and either capture Petersburg or take and hold such a commanding position near the city, as would render its speedy evacuation an absolute necessity.

As a diversion in favor of this enterprise, Hancock's command was ordered to proceed to Deep Bottom, and co-operate there with Foster and Sheridan in a demonstration against the Confederate lines in that vicinity. At five o'clock P. M. on the 26th, Hancock's column was under way. We marched down the City Point

road until within two or three miles of the landing, when we moved from the highway over the fields to the left, and were soon crossing the Appomattox. At eleven P. M., we halted just beyond the river, for a half hour's rest, and then pushed on again.

The night was very dark, but from the Appomattox forward our line of march was plainly marked out by small fires, which we found burning at regular intervals. At four o'clock, on the morning of the 27th, we reached the James river at Turkey Bend, and forthwith crossed on a pontoon bridge to Deep Bott[illegible].

About half a mile beyond the bridge, our advance came upon the enemy's pickets, and a brisk skirmish ensued. Presently a battle line, composed of a part of Barlow's division and three regiments from our brigade, advanced and drove the Confederate pickets in on their reserves, and then pushed the whole body back a mile and a half, through the woods and over an open strip of country called Strawberry Plains, into a strong line of earth-works—capturing during the advance four guns and a considerable number of prisoners.

There was more or less fighting going on about us all through the day. The 124th however was not sent into action, but at night was detailed for picket duty. At daybreak on the 28th we were withdrawn to the main body. But an hour later, were again ordered out on the same duty, and took up a line about one mile to the left of that on which we had spent the night. This time we remained out, without exchanging a shot with the foe, until eight o'clock that evening, when we were relieved by Barlow's men, and received orders to hasten back to the lines in front of Petersburg.

At five o'clock the next morning we bivouacked in rear of that portion of the Petersburg line held by the 18th corps, near the Appomattox. That evening our brigade moved forward to the main line of works, and relieved Turner's division—the 124th occupying the rifle pits on the picket line in front, with its left resting at a point about a quarter of a mile to the right of the doomed Confederate fort.

During the day and evening nothing unusual transpired, but

about midnight a company of artillerymen brought out several cohorn mortars, and planted them in positions along our line of rifle pits, which had evidently been prepared for their reception. Then all was quiet again until nearly five o'clock, when from the left there came a dull heavy boom, and "a solid mass of earth through which the exploding powder blazed like lightning playing in a bank of clouds, arose slowly some two hundred feet into the air; and hanging visible for a few seconds it subsided, and a heavy cloud of black smoke floated off" from the crater and shapeless piles of crumbling earth beneath which the crushed bodies of three hundred Confederates lay buried.

This explosion was the signal for a simultaneous outburst from every piece of artillery along that portion of the Union line, and for four hours their thunderings were terrific. At first the suddenly demoralized Confederates did not reply, but after a few moments their shells began to fall among us, and ere long their bullets, too, filled the air with familiar sounds. One of their mortar shells exploded within twenty feet of where I was standing, and tore off the right foot of Giles Curran of Co. I. A little later Thomas Kincaid of Co. K. was wounded in the face, and soon a bullet passed through both cheeks of Corp. James H. Taylor of Co. F.

The bombardment continued unintermittingly until about nine o'clock when the artillerymen were ordered to slacken their fire. Meantime, the events transpiring about the demolished fort were far from creditable to the Union forces there engaged, "some one had blundered," and at night Burnside's command reoccupied the works it had been withdrawn from for the assault—but with over four thousand less men for duty than it had mustered in the morning, while the enemy's losses in men including the three hundred blown up in the fort did not exceed one thousand. The details of this affair (known as the Burnside Fiasco) which had, to the Unionists, such an auspicious opening, but fearfully disastrous ending, have no closer connection with the 124th, than has already been stated, and we will therefore pass on to other more pertinent, if less interesting events.

We were relieved from duty in Burnside's picket pits at nine o'clock P. M. on the 30th, by troops of the same division we had relieved when we came there; and on reaching the main line, found the brigade formed in column awaiting our arrival. Falling in with it, we moved leisurely off to the camp we had started from on the 26th.

An official report of our brigade covering the period commencing with the battle of the Wilderness and ending July 31st, contains the following paragraph. "This brigade has lost since May 4th, in killed, wounded and missing, 126 officers and 2,543 men."

During July and the first ten days of the month of August, several of our men who had been on detached service, and a considerable number of convalescents from the hospitals, returned to duty with the regiment. Our morning report of August 11th showed that there were four hundred and twenty names remaining on the rolls of the regiment, and twelve officers, and one hundred and forty-two enlisted men present for duty.

On the 12th of August General Grant, undismayed by what he fitly characterized as the "miserable affair" of the 30th of July, resolved to again assume the offensive. Hancock was ordered to return to Deep Bottom, where his depleted corps would be strengthened by Birney's command and Grigg's division of cavalry, and once more engage the enemy's forces at that point.

Hancock's troops were relieved from the works in front of Petersburg at four o'clock P. M. on the 12th and at eight o'clock that evening, our brigade bivouacked for the night at City Point. This movement having been made in the day-time was of course seen by the enemy. But to deceive the Confederate leaders as to our destination, it had been given out several days previously that Hancock's Corps had been ordered to Washington. And to carry out the deception a fleet of transports had been sent up the James to City Point.

We found the fleet lying there with steam up and bows pointing down the stream, and at twelve M. on the 13th began to embark. As fast as the vessels were loaded they steamed

ahead about a mile and there remained until midnight, when at a given signal they swung around and started up the river.

The vessels having on board Gen. de Trobriand's brigade moved first, and that particular steamboat on which the 124th, together with the 73d and 86th New York, had taken passage had the lead. This fleet was made up of all kinds of craft from trim Hudson River steamboats which could make at least twenty miles an hour, to old turtle shape and scow-bottom ferry-boats that could hardly make eight.

The vessel we were on happened to be one of the first mentioned kind, and after we had proceeded about two miles its captain, a crusty old chap, came to the upper deck where I stood talking with Colonel Burns of the 73d, and asked me for instructions, to which I frankly replied that I had received none and referred him to Burns, who in his rough way made known that he was as ignorant as myself as to where the vessel was expected to take us; whereupon the captain gave vent to his feelings in true sailor language and style; the purport of his remarks being, that his pilot had never been up that creek before, that he had expected to follow in the wake of some other boat, but had been started off without instructions under full head of steam; and that unless he received orders to the contrary he would follow the middle of the stream as well as he could, and keep going until he ran aground or brought up against the wharfs of h—l, "or Richmond," put in Burns, adding "I say, Weygant, I would like to have that old cuss in my regiment, he's a regular"—I won't write it. Any one who ever knew Col. Burns will be able to fill out the sentence correctly, and to those who never had that pleasure it is of no consequence.

After we were out of sight and hearing of every other vessel, our brave captain evidently reconsidered his rash determination, for he slackened his speed so that we seemed to be lying still. Presently a small tug with Generals Mott and de Trobriand on board came puffing up the river, like a man almost out of breath, and passing to the front, took the lead.

About half past four, just as the day commenced to break, we

reached Deep Bottom and began to disembark. As soon as our three regiments could be formed on the shore a strong picket line was established, after which we stacked arms, and lay down on the grass to await the arrival of the balance of the corps.

At nine o'clock two of General de Trobriand's regiments were, pursuant to orders from General Mott, deployed as skirmishers, and followed by a supporting force composed of the remaining regiments of the brigade, moved forward through the woods.

About a mile beyond the river our skirmishers were met by those of the enemy and the two lines soon became hotly engaged. But at the end of twenty minutes, the Confederates began to give ground and were slowly but steadily forced back into a strong line of earthworks on the brow of a commanding ridge. In front of these works our skirmishers were formed into a strong picket line, while our main body was massed in the woods a short distance to the rear.

Presently, the 124th was ordered to advance to the support of a section of the 4th Maine battery which had taken position just behind the picket line, and opened on the enemy's works. Just as we reached these guns, a Confederate battery began to reply and a rather lively exchange of iron compliments ensued.

Our batterymen made some grand shots, causing clouds of dust to arise from the works in front, and sometimes apparently from right under the enemy's guns. These telling shots elicited from my men shouts of applause. Capt. Mapes especially became very much interested and walked up to the rear of one of the pieces which the gunners were about to fire, with the evident intent of watching more closely than he could in rear of his company, the effect of the shell when it exploded; but as the commander of the gunners shouted "Fire," I heard from the captain a cry indicating intense pain. A sharpshooter's rifle had sent a leaden "call to the hospital" through his thigh, splintering the bone, a piece of which, about the size of a minnie ball, was carried through the wound and clung to his pants just below the hole made in them by the exit of the bullet.

A few moments later Private Allen Owen of Co. A. was

wounded severely, also in the thigh, and then Sergeant Samuel Rollings of the same company received a slight wound in the arm.

We were lying in the outer edge of a piece of woods. About noon the guns were withdrawn and we moved back in among the trees a short distance so as to be out of sight of the Confederate sharpshooters, and there spent the remainder of the day and following night.

Meantime Barlow had moved around the enemy's flank and attacked him in rear, and Birney with a portion of the Tenth Corps had assaulted his lines near the river; but the delay of the morning had proved fatal to the success of these efforts, for the enemy was found to have been strongly reinforced at both points, and the assailants were forced to withdraw with considerable loss, and without accomplishing anything of consequence save the capture of four guns by Birney's command.

On the morning of the 15th the 124th was ordered on picket. Our line extended across an open plain. During the day a Union gun-boat sent over a number of monstrous shells which were evidently aimed to reach the enemy, but came short of their intended destination just enough to fall on the plain along our line. They were almost as large as nail kegs and the noise they made was most hideous. Fortunately no member of 124th was killed, or permanently injured by them, but several had their feelings badly wounded. We could not only hear but could see them coming—right at us every time—and some of the boys who happened to be on their feet as one approached, were unable to remain erect, and of course became the laughing stock of those who had been so fortunate as to lie down before the heavy gun was fired.

We were relieved from picket duty at eight A. M. on the 16th, but had scarcely reached the main line when I was ordered to move with my command out to the left, and prolong the picket line in that direction. To get to the position indicated it became necessary to pass over a narrow strip of open ground which ran up to the enemy's works and was swept by one of his batteries. The moment the head of my regimental column reached this place

the enemy's guns opened furiously; but their range was rather high, and by crouching very low, and passing over one at a time, we managed to get across it and deployed over the space I had been directed to cover without loss.

The greater part of this new picket line ran through the woods, and the men on the outposts were well protected by large trees; but in front of that portion held by Companies G. and K. was a field of grain which, like the open space referred to above, ran up to the enemy's works. Presently a small body of Confederates crept forward through this grain and opened on our men, who, standing in the open field, became conspicuous targets, the foe meantime remaining entirely concealed.

At first I directed the men of these companies to lie down and return the fire the best they could in that position, but this shooting at random seemed like a useless waste of ammunition and I presently concluded to see what could be effected by advancing a small force through the grain toward them. Selecting about a dozen men from the companies named I ordered them forward. Plunging into the grain which was higher than their heads, and firing as they advanced, they soon caught sight of, and brought down, two stalwart Confederates, whereupon the balance took to their heels and did not halt until they had climbed over and were safe behind their breastworks.

In this affair Lewis T. Shultz of Co. G. who had been promoted from the ranks to a sergeancy for marked bravery at the battle of the Wilderness, and Corporal David U. Quick of Co. K, behaved with conspicuous gallantry. They were both wounded just as they started, the sergeant in the hand and the corporal in the face and arm, but neither turned back until after the enemy had been routed; and even then the bullets from their guns were the last sent after the fleeing Confederates.

After this the day passed very quietly without anything of consequence transpiring along General Mott's front. But we heard during the afternoon heavy cannonading to our right, and subsequently learned that General Birney's troops had made a direct assault on the enemy's works about a mile distant, cap-

turing three battle flags and upwards of three hundred prisoners; but had in the end been driven back with considerable loss. Also that a brigade from Barlow's division had been operating, with Grigg's cavalry, on the Charles City Cross Road, still farther away; but without achieving any advantageous results for the Union cause, save the killing of the Confederate General Chambliss, and the disabling of a few of his followers.

The 124th was not relieved from this tour of picket duty until nine P. M. on the 17th. And at nine P. M. on the 18th Hancock's entire command was well on its way toward Petersburg again.

CASUALTIES OF 124TH IN FRONT OF PETERSBURG, JULY 30, 1864.

Corp. James H. Taylor,	Co.	F	Wounded.
Private Giles Curran,	"	I	"
" Thomas Kincade,	"	K	"
" Cornelius Hughes,	"	G	"
" William H. Jackson.	"	G	"
" Patrick Flannery,	"	A	"

CASUALTIES AT DEEP BOTTOM, AUGUST 14 TO 16, 1864.

Capt. William E. Mapes,	Co.	B	Wounded.
Sergt. Samuel T. Rollings,	"	A	"
Sergt. Lewis T. Shultz,	"	G	"
Corp. David U. Quick,	"	K	"
Private Allen Owen,	"	A	"

CHAPTER XIX.

In front of Petersburg—Battle of Boydton Road.

WE recrossed the Appomattox near Bermuda Hundred at half past eleven P. M. on the 18th of August, and continued our return march at a moderate gait until daybreak, when the welcome order, "Halt half an hour for breakfast," was passed down the column. While the boys were boiling their coffee a severe storm, which had been brewing since midnight, "opened upon us." But promptly at the end of the allotted half hour the forward was sounded, and hurrying into line we resumed the march, plodding on through the continually deepening mud and drenching rain until midday, when we reached the main line in front of Petersburg. There we stacked arms behind a portion of the works which had been erected and occupied up to within a few days by troops of the Fifth Corps, but which were vacated on our arrival by a brigade of Burnside's men. Our new position was about three miles to the left of the one we had marched from on the 12th.

We had been on duty nearly every night as well as day for over a week, and were consequently thoroughly worn down. The rain continued to fall quite heavily and our tents were soon pitched. But the muddy ground was a most uninviting resting place and as the men could not well become any more thoroughly soaked than they were when we arrived, the greater part of the afternoon was devoted to collecting pine boughs for beds, and cleaning up our camp; for a regiment of soldiers changing camp, like a family moving from one hired house to another, usually leave a vast amount of filth scattered about the premises they vacate, and then say very hard things about the "dirty brutes" who have just left the place they are moving into.

It was unusually quiet along our front that afternoon, but about nine o'clock in the evening the guns, in two of the enemy's forts, were opened on our brigade camps and the works we were occupying. And they continued to hurl their shot and shell at regular intervals all night and the greater part of the following day; making things very lively around General de Trobriand's headquarters where, during the night, two men who were on guard, and three horses, were wounded with pieces of shell.

The pickets, too, opening simultaneously with the artillery, kept up an incessant rattling all along the front, and a considerable number of stray bullets went whistling through the camp of the 124th; but the only man of our number wounded on that occasion was little Jimmy Daniels of Co. C., who was hit in the leg. Some of their cannon balls too, must have landed in our camp, for on a soiled leaf of my journal, under date of Aug. 20th, 1864, I find the following entry, "A solid shot just struck the ground in front of my tent and spattered the mud on this leaf, and in my face, and all over my best coat."

A few pages further on I come to this note—"That unfortunate *best coat* of mine is a total wreck. I rode over to the train this morning on my new mare to see Quartermaster Post, and came out of his tent laughing over some new joke of his; and unmindful of the fact that the secesh brute was in the habit of acting badly when any one attempted to mount her, took the reins from a man who was holding her, and in a very careless manner placed my foot in the stirrup and gave a spring; but before I had fairly reached the saddle she reared, and with a desperate plunge which jerked one of the bridle reins from my hand and hurled the opposite stirrup over her back, bounded off through the tall stumps which stood only a few feet apart, for before our arrival in front of Petersburg, all that section had been a vast forest. Having but one stirrup and one rein I was unable to guide the mad beast; and as she plunged around, first this way and then that, among the stumps, the prospect of having my brains dashed out against one of them became anything but agreeable. Presently I saw, just ahead, a strip of cleared ground, which had evidently

been a roadway, and remembering the old adage, discretion is the better part of valor, concluded to make a landing there regardless of appearances; for I knew that a dozen or more Quartermasters with their attendants were watching the result of my wild ride. The moment I passed the last row of stumps, I dropped the rein and sprang upward. Of course I did not sit down on the ground very gracefully, or as easily as usual, but I remained very quiet for a few seconds after I got there. When I picked myself up I discovered that my left wrist was sprained, and that I had very foolishly bitten my tongue. Lieutenant Post soon came up and began brushing my clothes. I swallowed the blood from my lacerated tongue and said not a word about my sprained wrist, for I prided myself on my superior horsemanship. Presently Post said to me in his dry way 'Colonel, I am afraid you have your coat on wrong side before. The buttons are in front but it is open behind.'"

Turning over a few more pages of my journal I read, "Another court-martial has been ordered, and as usual I am a member of it. It is only three days since the old court was dissolved. The new court held its first session to-day, in a large house near division headquarters. While there I met the gay and dashing General ———, who is evidently bent on being the best mounted officer in the corps. He offered me eight hundred dollars for my mare. He saw her at the review the other day; and she did behave splendidly on that occasion. When I wheeled to salute the reviewing officer, she gave her immense tail a graceful wave and followed the motion of my sabre with her bold head, raising her nostrils high in the air, and then dropping them down between her forelegs with a coquettish shake that tossed her long mane in a most airy manner; as if she knew all about what was taking place and had resolved to outdo her rider. If I can get an even thousand dollars I think I will let her go." The next entry reads: "Have not only lost the sale of my mare, but have been ordered not to ride her on review again. General Meade reviewed us this afternoon and when I saluted the treacherous brute instead of performing her graceful antics made one of

her desperate plunges, right at a group of generals who had taken post to the left of Meade, and wheeling about, let go her hind feet, striking and I fear breaking the jaws of the horse of a grey-haired General whose name I did not learn. His poor docile beast when struck started back a few yards and sat down on his haunches pointing his trembling nose skyward like a superannuated setter dog that had just treed a possum; and letting his rider slip gracelessly off behind, to the mingled amusement and annoyance of all who witnessed the occurrence, except the old General and myself. We received a double share of the annoyance without partaking in the slightest degree of the opposite feeling."

From the 20th of August to the 9th of September very little of general interest transpired in Mott's division, the troops of which were as usual kept busy building earthworks and doing picket duty.

An interesting private letter written in the camp of the 124th on the 28th of August contains the following. "The regiment is still in the trenches, and has been since the morning of the 19th. The opposing lines here are in such close proximity that it is no trouble to talk with the Johnnies from the main works. The picket lines in several places are not over fifty feet apart. At night a man is sent out several paces in front of each post. There is one place on our lines where the opposing sentinels can almost shake hands with each other. There is no picket firing at present along our front, a compromise having been effected between the pickets, by which our boys when not too closely watched by their officers, trade all sorts of Yankee notions for tobacco. The Johnnies have a queer way of talking. They either learned it from the darkeys, or else the darkeys learned from them. Our pickets are posted about one hundred feet apart and stand in pits about four feet deep and just large enough to hold two persons. Between the picket pits and main works is a line of abatis made of trees with the ends of the branches trimmed sharp, and pointing toward the enemy. These trees are placed side by side close together, and the buts are fastened in the ground very securely. Every company has one or more gopher holes or bombproofs,

which are made by digging pits in the earth and covering them over with heavy logs and dirt. We don't particularly mind the shell from the enemy's forts for they usually pass over our camp, but occasionally a mortar battery which is located directly opposite opens, and for an hour or more pieces of iron fly about in a very careless manner. At such times we usually find it convenient to step inside our bombproofs and fix them up a little, for you know we can't tell how soon we may have occasion to use them. You would enjoy sitting down behind our main works during one of our regular artillery duels; I was on duty this morning when one took place. The enemy opened the affair from his forts. The first shot was rather high and one of our men jumped up on the works and shouted, "Oh bosh! Johnnies what is the use of shooting at the sun." Presently a shell struck and exploded in our works scattering the dirt about at a great rate and endangering life and limb, whereupon some one raised up and shouted, "Bully for you! now go for the sun once more, won't you?" Quite a number of the Johnnies were standing on their works watching the effect of their shells, but when our battery opened you ought to have seen them drop, and after that both sides lay low until the circus was over. There is no musketry firing, but these artillery duels take place nearly every morning and evening, making it very uncomfortable for those of us who are used to a quiet life in the country. I wish I could give you a correct idea of the face of the earth about Petersburg, but that is impossible to me with a pen. I really believe it would cost at the present price of labor, a thousand dollars an acre to level and prepare the ground for agricultural purposes again. Immense furrows follow each other over a strip of ground nearly a mile wide, and the principal ones are about fifteen miles in length. I have seen a line of works that would reach from Newburgh to Cornwall and back" (10 miles) "built in a single night. This belt of earthworks is fringed with road pits which run back toward the rear, and are built in a zig-zag fashion, like rail fences at the north, with the dirt thrown up on the side toward the enemy. They have been made for the protection of all the trains,

but more particularly for that of the ammunition wagons which are sometimes obliged to come up to the works under fire. A secesh band is playing '*Wait for the Wagon*,' and ours will soon reply with '*The red, white, and blue*,' or some other patriotic song."

On the evening of the sixth of June, I sat on our earthworks for over an hour watching shells pass through the air and fall into Petersburg. They were fired from two immense siege guns, called the twin-sisters which had been planted in an earthwork prepared especially for them off to the right and over two miles from the city. These guns were elevated so that one would suppose the shells they sent were fired from a mortar. They would mount up higher and yet higher, going slower and slower until they seemed to stand still up among the stars, and then slowly turning a quarter circle would begin their downward flight, moving faster and faster until they exploded over or dropped into the city. These shells, in their passage up in the heavens and down to the earth again, were suggestive of huge darting fire-flies and when at the turning point seemed twinkling stars—the fire of the burning fuse appearing and disappearing at regular intervals.

The majority of the females whose homes were in Fredericksburg had, it was said, gone to visit friends and relatives in other and safer places, or were camping with their children and slave attendants in the adjacent fields, out of range of Yankee cannon balls; but not a few of the young women remained in the city showing their lovers how to be brave.

On returning to my quarters that evening I found awaiting my arrival, an order from General de Trobriand which directed me to hold the regiment in readiness to move to another camp as soon as it was dark enough to do so unobserved by the enemy.

We moved about midnight, but only from forty to fifty rods. The camp we moved into was much better supplied with bomb-proofs than the one we left.

On the 7th I received a letter from Major Murray, who was home on sick leave, stating that Robert A. Malone of Middletown, who had been engaged for several weeks raising a company of volunteers for the regiment, had enrolled sixty-eight men nearly

every one of whom had seen service in other regiments. I wrote to Gov. Seymour that evening requesting that a captain's commission be issued to Malone, and that a First Lieutenant's commission be issued to John S. King, also of Middletown, who had assisted Capt. Malone in raising the company. They had both held commissions in another regiment and proved to be most efficient officers. The position of Second Lieutenant I reserved for Wood T. Ogden, the efficient orderly of K., with which company I proposed to incorporate the majority of Malone's men.

Small squads of convalescents now rejoined us almost daily. And I had since my return on the 4th of July received Lieutenant's commissions for Sergeants Jonathan Birdsall of A., Thomas Taft of C., and Ebenezer Holbert of D. Each of these had been assigned to the command of a company, but on the 8th of September, there was yet one company for which I had no commissioned officer.

On the evening of the 9th, I received orders directing me to assemble my regiment at half past twelve that night and hold it in readiness to support the 20th Ind., 99th Penn. and 2d U. S. S. S., in an attack "which is to be made," so reads the order "for the purpose of capturing the enemy's pickets and line of pits." A surprise was to be attempted, but if our movements were discovered a bold dash was to be made.

At one o'clock the attacking party crept out right on to the enemy's videttes before they were discovered, captured and hurried back to the main works over a hundred of them, and with but trifling loss established the Union line where that of the Confederates had been. But ten minutes later the work of death began in earnest, and the night was made hideous with discordant sounds. Every battery and fort for miles around began a furious cannonade, the pickets opened all along the lines on both sides of us, and three times the enemy in our front charged de Trobriand's line, determined to retake the lost ground. But they did not succeed, and at last gave up the task and established a new line nearer their earthworks. This attack was made at a point where the main lines were a considerable distance apart, and where the

enemy's pickets had been creeping out a few feet at a time until they occupied two-thirds of the intervening space. They had by this assault simply been forced to take up a new line in the proper place. That at least was the version of the result given by our gallant and punctilious French brigadier.

In the enemy's attempts to retake his lost line of picket pits, a large number were killed and wounded on both sides. Among the Union killed were Lieutenant-Colonel Mickel, commanding officer of the 20th Ind., and Private George G. King, a member of Co. C. of the 124th, who had for several months past been on duty with the ambulance train. When a call was made for a stretcher on which to carry off Colonel Mickel, King rushed forward with one, through a perfect shower of bullets; but was shot through the heart before he reached the Colonel's body. The regiments already named were the only Union troops called into action, and early the next morning I sent a detachment to bury our brave stretcher-bearer.

After this affair the picket firing was incessant and most desperate for over a week. If a man raised his head, on either side a score of bullets were fired at it. The pickets could be relieved only at midnight and then were frequently obliged to crawl back and forth on their hands and knees. On the 12th Joseph Point of B. was severely wounded in the head. On the 14th Corp. Chester Judson of H. was shot through the brain, and on the 15th Martin Campbell of B. was killed in like manner.

Judson and Campbell were both shot in the daytime, and I think in the morning, but their bodies could not be removed until night. I leave the reader to imagine the feelings of the solitary vidette doing double duty, hour after hour with his comrade's dead body lying in the narrow pit beside him, and then, when relieved at night he creeps back to the main works dragging the lifeless clay after him.

Lieutenant Taft writing concerning the burial of Corporal Judson says, "We buried him by moonlight, and it was a most solemn scene. We wrapped him in his blanket and placed him in a cracker box coffin, a prayer was offered at his grave which was

dug and filled again by the chief mourners, and I reported one man less for duty."

On or about the 20th the pickets ceased firing at each other, and everything in camp moved along very quietly until the 26th when the paymaster put in his appearance. The effect of his arrival is described in a letter written in the camp of the 124th the next day as follows, "The long looked for—the paymaster I mean—came yesterday. Greenbacks are good for the eyes and have a most wonderful effect on the countenance. Two days ago every one I met looked downhearted, now every one I see wears a broad smile on his face, and I can't help looking off toward the sutler's tent and slapping my pocket. Who wouldn't be a soldier? Did you ever work hard at least twelve hours out of every twenty-four, and wander listlessly about between times for over two months at a stretch, without a cent in your pocket and no credit at the *store?* If not you will be unable to appreciate my feelings on this occasion."

We were making, about this time, strenuous efforts to fill up the regiment and Secretary Seward had promised Major Murray to see that several hundred drafted men were sent to us. About the first of October Colonel Tracy commanding Draft Rendezvous at Elmira, N. Y., was directed to forward us two hundred men. Instead of attempting to account for what became of these men, I will insert a verbatim copy of a communication made in regard to them, with the indorsements thereon.

"HEAD-QUARTERS 124TH N. Y. VOL., OCTOBER 12, 1864.

MAJOR D. D. PERKINS, *A. A. G.*

"I respectfully report that on the eighth of this month, I received from Col. B. F. Tracy comd'g. Draft Rendezvous at Elmira, N. Y., muster and descriptive rolls that had originally contained the names of two hundred (200) men, but from which one hundred and eighteen had been ruled off, leaving eighty-two names yet on the rolls. With these rolls there came to my regiment but seven (7) men and not one of the remaining number have since arrived.

"Very respectfully yours,

"CHAS. H. WEYGANT,

"*Lieut. Col. Comd'g.*"

"WAR DEPT., A. G. O. WASHINGTON, D. C., OCT. 18, 1864.

"Respectfully referred to commanding officer Draft Rendezvous, Elmira, N. Y., for his report on this communication, stating to whom and at what point the men referred to were turned over, with date—To be returned.

"By order

"D. D. PERKINS, *Asst. Adjt.-Genl.*"

"HEAD-QUARTERS DRAFT RENDEZVOUS, ELMIRA, N. Y. OCT. 23, 1864

"Respectfully returned to Maj. D. D. Perkins A. A. Gen.—I have the honor to make the following report. Eighty-two (82) substitutes for the 124th N. Y. Vols., were forwarded from this post Oct. 3d, 1864, and turned over to the Provost-marshal at City Point, Va., Oct. 6th, 1864.

"B. F. TRACY, *Col.* 127th *U. S. C. T. Comd'g Post.*"

"WAR DEPT. A. G. O. WASHINGTON, OCT. 26, 1864.

"Respectfully returned (through commanding general of the army of the Potomac) with reference to endorsed report of Col. B. F. Tracy commanding Draft Rendezvous Elmira, N. Y.

"By order

"D. D. PERKINS, *Asst. Adjt.-Gen.*"

"HEAD-QUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, OCT. 30, 1864.

"Respectfully returned to commanding officer 124th N. Y. Vols. through comd'g officer Second corps.

"By command of

"MAJ. GENERAL MEADE.

"CHAS. E. PEASE, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*"

"HEAD-QUARTERS 2D ARMY CORPS, OCT. 31, 1864.

"Respectfully returned to comd'g. officer 124th N. Y. Vols. through comd'g. officer 3d Division.

"By order of

"MAJ. GENERAL HANCOCK.

"SEPT. CARNCROSS, *Maj. & A. A. G.*"

"HEAD-QUARTERS 3D DIVISION, 2D ARMY CORPS, OCT. 31, 1864.

"Respectfully returned to C. O. 124th N. Y. Vols. through C. O. 1st Brigade.

"By command of

"MAJ. GENERAL MOTT.

"B. P. FINKILMUIER, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*"

"HEAD-QUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE 3D DIVISION 2D CORPS, NOV. 2, 1864.

"Respectfully returned to C. O. 124th N. Y. V.—As these endorsements do not afford any information concerning the whereabouts of the

men in question the C. O. 124th N. Y. V. will make another application concerning them.

"By command of

"BRIG. GENERAL R. de TROBRIAND.

"AUG. W. KEENE, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*"

Received at Head-Quarters 124th N. Y. Vols. Nov. 3, 1864.

"WM. B. VAN HOUTEN, *Adjutant.*"

This piece of red tape had passed around an extended circle until the ends had come together, but it had not been run through the headquarters of our *worthy* and *efficient* provost-marshal general. A second communication met with like usage, and not one of the missing men ever reached the 124th.

On the last day of September, offensive operations against the enemy at Deep Bottom were resumed, and for several days there was severe fighting at different points along the Petersburg and Richmond lines; but the 124th did not become actually engaged. We however moved about considerably, and did a vast amount of work with axes, picks and shovels. On the first day of October our division was hurried out of camp to the railroad station near the Jerusalem Plank Road. There we found awaiting us a train of cars on which we were conveyed forthwith to the extreme Union left, where Warren with a heavy force had succeeded in extending his lines so that they crossed the Weldon railroad, one of the enemy's main arteries for supplies. We found Warren's forces were having all they could do to hold fast of their prize; and the most of our division was hurried forward to their assistance. The 124th with six other regiments of our brigade were however set to work cutting drive ways through a strip of woods, and building a strong redoubt in front of a Confederate *mansion* called the Clement House. After spending three days and nights at this work, we were relieved by General Ferrero's division of colored troops, and our brigade moved leisurely back to the Jerusalem plank road, and encamped in the second line near Fort Sedgwick. We were not however out of range of the enemy's bullets, and as usual were kept busy at fatigue and picket duty.

The fourth day after our arrival at this camp, pickets came

in, bearing with them the dead body of Private Grant B. Benjamin of Co. G.; and reported that just as they were being relieved Benjamin raised up from a sitting posture, and was in the act of folding his blanket when a bullet, from the gun of some sharpshooter off to the Confederate rear, passed through his brain, killing him instantly. Private Benjamin was a good soldier, and was followed to his grave by a large number of saddened comrades.

The next day, Oct. 10th, Private Benjamin Little of B. was temporary disabled by a bullet, and on the 20th Corporal Theodore Smith of A. was so badly injured that he never returned to duty with the regiment.

On the 22d while the men were busy preparing for inspection, a bullet came whistling through the camp, and the sound of that peculiar thud which always told such a sad story, came from the direction of Lieutenant Birdsall's tent, and Orderly Sergeant Wood of Co. A. hastened thither, but only to find the dead body of his company commander. A little red spot on his forehead told once again, plainer than words can express it, that now most familiar story of the enemy's fatal bullet.

Lieutenant Jonathan Birdsall was then our junior officer in years as well as rank, and was greatly esteemed by all who knew him. There was in his case one most comforting thought. In all the regiment there was not a person believed by his comrades to be ever more ready to meet death than young Birdsall. He was a thorough gentleman as well as christian, and of course had the respect of those under him and the esteem of his superiors. His brother officers had his body embalmed and placed in a metallic coffin, and expressed home to his friends.

That night I wrote as following, in my journal—"Poor brave noble little Birdsall—somehow I can't draw my thoughts from him. Our camp is the most exposed of any along this portion of the line. Nearly every tent in it has been pierced by Confederate bullets, or torn by shell. Every few moments, day and night, a piece of lead whistles through or falls into it. Not long since a minnie passed through my own tent just above my head. As I

was walking to supper this evening with Major Murray, one buried itself in the ground not a yard away, and directly behind us. The Major thought it had entered my body, and I felt sure it had wounded him. If my life-blood is to be drawn by a rebel bullet, or if many more of my brave boys are to fall, I trust it may be on the battle-field in a square open fight."

As the month of October drew toward its close, it became very apparent to all close observers, that General Grant did not intend to let us settle down into winter quarters, until we had made at least one more attempt to take Petersburg and Richmond; for the fall of either would, it was believed, necessitate the evacuation of the other

The first movement of importance, in the contemplated plan of active operations, was to be a determined effort to wrest from the enemy, the Southside railroad; which had now become the chief channel of communication between Petersburg and the country in its rear, and was protected by an advanced line of earthworks, several miles in extent.

The task of attacking these works was assigned to the Ninth and Fifth corps; while Hancock's command, accompanied by Gregg's division of cavalry, was ordered to move around to the west side of Hatchers' Run, sweep across the Boydton road and seize the coveted Southside railroad.

The 124th now mustered for duty sixteen fighting officers and upwards of two hundred and thirty enlisted men. The brave Captain Benedict—though his wounds were not yet entirely healed—had returned to the regiment, and been assigned to duty as acting Major, while Major Murray took the position of Lieutenant-Colonel. Our plucky sharpshooter Lieutenant Carmick was once more in command of Company F., and Lieutenant Thomas W. Bradley who had recently been promoted from a sergeantcy in H. had been assigned to the command of company B. With a full field, and with each little company under a true and tried commander, I felt very confident that in the coming conflict the 124th would perform most creditably whatever duty was assigned it.

During the night of the 24th, such of the troops of the corps mentioned as could be spared from the main line, were withdrawn and massed in neighboring ravines, out of sight of the enemy. On the afternoon of the 26th Hancock's command moved to the left as far as the Weldon road and there bivouacked for the night.

About four o'clock on the morning of the 27th the Ninth and Fifth corps, which had moved out and taken position during the night began to advance, and Mott's division, led by our brigade resumed its march along the Vaughan road. Very little worthy of note transpired until we were within half a mile of Hatchers' Run when brisk skirmish firing broke out in front of us, and we soon overtook Gibbon's old division now under General Eagan; (Eagan was formerly colonel of the 40th New York of our brigade) which we found drawn up in battle line and preparing to force a passage of the stream which was defended by a small force of the enemy posted behind a light line of rifle pits. This Eagan's troops soon accomplished without our assistance; after which we crossed at our leisure and moved on in column with flankers on our left, following their battle line

It was now nearly ten o'clock and we could hear heavy cannonading off to our right. The farther we advanced the sharper grew the skirmish firing along Eagan's front, and every few moments a wounded man would be carried past toward the rear. Some of these wounded men looked very pale and others presented blood-stained faces or garments, suggesting unpleasant thoughts to those who were pressing forward, for all believed we would soon find our advance disputed by a battle line instead of skirmishers.

Presently an order came for our brigade to move to the front and relieve the brigade on the left of Eagan's line. Hastily forming battle line and throwing out the 73d N. Y. and 2d U. S. S. S. as skirmishers we started forward on a double-quick and soon reached the troops we were to relieve. This brigade had for some cause fallen considerably behind the rest of Eagan's line and on our approach moved by the right flank on a run out of

our way. Our skirmishers soon became actually engaged with those of the enemy and drove them rapidly back out of the woods, over an open field, and then into the woods again, behind an old steam mill. At this mill we came up to and connected our right with Eagan's battle line, and pushed on with it until we reached the Boydton road. Here our entire corps was halted by an order from General Meade. Our brigade was then moved to the left, to make room between our right and Eagan's left for the balance of Mott's division which consisted of the brigades of Pierce and McAllister.

General de Trobriand's command now constituted the extreme Union left. His battle line extended across an open field, with regiments posted from right to left in the following order: 99th Pa., 110th Pa., 20th Ind., 40th N. Y., 1st Me. heavy artillery * and 17th Me. Volunteers. The 73d and 86th N. Y. were advanced a third of a mile and so deployed as to cover both front and flank of his main line; connecting on the left with the cavalry pickets, and on the right with the 124th N. Y., which was posted in a rather extended battle line at the outer edge of a piece of woods, across a road down which it was expected the enemy would attempt to advance. The line of the 73d and 86th ran in the form of a quarter circle through a dense wood; but along the entire front of the 124th there was an open field about twenty rods in width. On the opposite side of this field the trees were large and grew very close together. The 2d U. S. S. S. was posted as a reserve to the picket line composed of 73d and 86th. The pickets of Mc Allister's brigade were supposed to extend to the right of the 124th.

Hancock had been ordered to connect his right with the left of Crawford's division of the Fifth corps, but unfortunately no one seemed to know just where Crawford's left rested; and General Eagan was accordingly directed to move cautiously through the wood to the right, with the bulk of his command, and see if he could not find it and make the desired connection.

* This regiment was acting as infantry, had recently been attached to our brigade and carried over a thousand rifles.

Now Crawford's advance had run into an almost impenetrable swamp a mile to the rear, and Eagan, at the end of an hour, was no nearer the object of his search than when he started.

Meantime the enemy, who it appears was better acquainted with the situation of affairs along the Union lines than our own commanders, and had been waiting patiently a favorable opportunity for striking a telling blow, hurried off a portion of Hill's corps under General Heath, against General Mott's isolated division.

The first intimation Mott had of an advance in force against him, came about four o'clock P. M. in the shape of a furious charge on Pierce's brigade, which, startled by the unexpected attack, gave way and fell back in disorder, leaving two guns to fall into the hands of the enemy. Fortunately Eagan, who was not far away, hearing the thunder of battle in his rear, about faced and hastened to the rescue with half of his division, and joined by Mc Allister's brigade, and the 99th Pa. and 20th Ind. from the right of de Trobriand's line, dashed forward with wild shouts, on a most gallant counter-charge, routing Heath's entire force, retaking the guns Pierce had lost, and capturing over a thousand prisoners.

While the battle was raging along Mott's right and centre a flanking force of dismounted cavalry, accompanied by a battery of rifled guns, came thundering down the road held by the 124th until brought to a halt by our bullets; when hastily deploying, and creeping up to the edge of the woods opposite, they opened a most furious counter-fire with small arms while shells from their battery, planted across the road, tore through the trees in a most unpleasant manner. Those of my men who could not get shelter behind the trees, threw themselves on the ground, and all kept up as rapid a fire as they possibly could.

Presently one of General de Trobriand's aids rode up, and presenting the compliments of his chief, said he was sent to inquire whether I did not think I could silence that battery in my front by capturing it. I told him to tell the general that we could try, but that the assistance of at least one regiment

would be very acceptable. Fifteen minutes later back came the aid with the Sharpshooters and the General's order to "Go ahead and be sure you get the guns."

The commander of the sharpshooters rode boldly up to the front, and taking off his slouched hat shouted. "Halloo, Colonel—here we are at your service." But before I had time to give him any instructions, a bullet tumbled him from his horse; whereupon his men, without waiting for orders, rushed forward and, scattering themselves along the line, dropped down on their knees, and opened fire as deliberately as if each man of the little regiment had determined to personally revenge the fall of his leader. They were none too soon, for just then a battle line of the foe appeared in the open field, intent on charging us; but the telling fire from our consolidated line soon sent them back in confusion. Now, thought I, is our time to strike. I was at the left of my line, where I had gone to send word of our intention to Colonel Lansing of the 86th, and to ask his skirmishers who were not engaged to look after our flank, and was about to hasten back to the centre, and order the charge, when Lieutenant Rathborne of the 86th came running up with, as I supposed, a message from Lansing. While in the act of turning around to receive this message a bullet passed through my side and entered the body of the Lieutenant, and as he fell I tumbled over him—into darkness.

On my return to consciousness Sergeant Tom Hart, of my old company, and a private soldier whose name I do not remember, were carrying me through an open field. On looking about I saw General de Trobriand riding toward me. I explained to the general as well as I could, how I had left matters at the front, and he immediately ordered forward Kirwin's dismounted cavalry, which was temporarily under his command, to the support of the 124th and the Sharpshooters. The general also directed me to the hospital which had been established for the wounded of the division, at a little house in the edge of the woods about an eighth of a mile farther to the rear. At this house I found our assistant surgeon, Dr. Montfort, who examined and dressed my wound;

and I felt very much relieved when he informed me it would not prove serious, as the ball had evidently gone around instead of through me. On my asking a second time, "Doctor, are you sure it did not go straight through," he replied laughingly, "quite sure of that, for if it had, it would have made a hole through your heart."

Before reaching the hospital I had lost considerable blood and was consequently quite weak; and after resting at the house a short time made my way out to our ambulances, which stood in a row close by, and lay down in the first one I came to. In a few moments one of the hospital attendants came and informed me that Major Murray had been brought back, wounded in the leg.

Presently a rain storm set in, and it soon became very dark. Meantime the heavier noises of battle gradually died away and I concluded that the Unionists had been successful, or else the ambulances would have been sent to the rear, and rising to a sitting posture began looking through the gloom at the horses which were hitched to the ambulance I was in. I was wondering what color they were, when all of a sudden three or four cannon balls, which seemed to come right out of the little house where the doctors were, went thundering past; and one of them carried away the upper part of the head of one of the horses I was looking at, and as the poor brute fell his mate made a desperate plunge, but did no harm to the ambulance, for he was securely tied to a tree, beside being held fast by the weight of the dead horse.

We were in direct range of a Confederate battery, which was firing right through the house referred to, and all the other ambulances were hurried out of the way. When it was too late to make a change I became convinced that I had taken the wrong conveyance and forthwith crawled out at the rear end. Fortunately just as I alighted a shell burst above my head lighting up a space of a hundred feet or more all about where I was standing, and I saw my hostler, George Hawley, leading past my spirited mare and Adjutant Van Houten's docile horse. Calling Hawley to me, I with his assistance mounted the adjutant's beast (for it was not a favorable opportunity and beside

I had no especial desire to make any display just then) and walked him into the woods off toward what I supposed to be the Union rear. We were soon out of range of shot and shell. The farther we went the harder it rained and the darker grew the night. Every few moments we would pass or be passed by a little band of men who, like ourselves, were wandering they knew not where. The woods seemed to grow more and more dense, and it soon became so very dark that I could not tell one object from another. Hawley tried hard to keep with me, but I presently missed him. He had followed some passing horsemen and was out of hearing. A little later a considerable body of mounted men came along, but I did not like the sound of their voices and moved out of their way. It turned out afterward that these woods were filled with the wounded men and stragglers of both armies. A little farther on I heard another body of horsemen approaching, and on listening attentively recognized the voice of Captain Benedict.

The captain, as has been stated, was not able to walk and when at four P. M. I received orders to advance through the woods and take up a position across the road on the right of the picket line, I ordered him to remain in the rear; for I felt that we were going where a mounted man would be of little use except as a target to be shot at.

The captain was soon at my side, and by talking continually we managed to keep together. The rest of the party were strangers, and for aught we knew half of them were Confederates. But fighting was no part of our business just then, and no impudent questions were asked. Presently we saw a bright light shining through the woods just ahead of us, and the next moment found ourselves on a narrow road, and discovered that the light came from a candle in the window of a house close by.

In the door of this house there stood a *she devil*, which we took to be a badly frightened old lady. I asked her what road we were on. In reply she answered that it led to the Yellow Tavern. Now the Yellow Tavern was just inside the Union line of earthworks, and was the very point we were desirous of striking. Thanking her for the information we moved on, but before we

were a hundred yards from the house, there came from a dozen voices just ahead of us, the Southern shout of "Halt!—halt! You Yankee sons ———" accompanied by a most familiar clicking sound, which spread to right and left along our front, and the next moment bullets began to whistle among us, and several of our number were wounded; whereupon there went up shouts of "I surrender, I surrender," from a dozen throats. The others wheeled about, put spurs to their horses and hurried back through the woods out of range.

I remember very distinctly, that for half an hour before we reached this house I was so thoroughly exhausted that I had half a mind to dismount and lie down in the woods, and I think I would have done so only that I was afraid of being run over by some wandering horseman; but at the sound of that ungentlemanly order to surrender, my strength was suddenly revived, and I poked my spurs in the ribs of the horse I was riding with such force that he started back with a bound that caused my hat to fly off—and I did not stop to pick it up. It was a new regulation hat of the latest style and had a gilt cord about it, so large that I have no doubt the Confederate who found it the next morning, supposed he was in possession of the head covering of some Yankee drum major or bran new general of cavalry.

Those of our party who had escaped capture were scattered through the woods. The rain continued to fall in torrents, and for two or three hours I wandered about through the darkness not knowing which way to go, and finally saw ahead of me another light. I had become somewhat suspicious of that sort of thing, and instead of riding up to it, brought my horse to a stand, and sat there watching and listening. Presently I heard voices and soon another party of horsemen rode past, going toward the light; but they too soon reined up, and began discussing the situation. I was soon satisfied they were Unionists and rode forward and joined them. I could now see the reflection of several fires instead of one, and the general opinion was that a cavalry picket line ran through the woods just ahead of us; but whether it was

composed of Confederates or Unionists was a question which could be answered only after a closer examination. Some one suggested that one of our number dismount and reconnoitre, but while all agreed to the proposition, several minutes elapsed before any one volunteered to attempt the hazardous undertaking; then a man whose horse was standing beside mine, dismounted and handing me his reins said, "I am a non-combatant, and if captured will perhaps meet with better usage than would be extended to any one of you. If they are Confederates and I am taken I will shout come on, otherwise I will come back to you." He then crept cautiously forward through the brush. It seemed that he was gone a very long time but we finally heard a rattling in the brush again, and he returned with the assurance that the lights we saw were the fires of Union stragglers, who were boiling coffee along a highway.

As soon as I reached this road the excitement which had buoyed me up during the night suddenly deserted me, and I felt weaker than ever. I had not eaten a mouthful in nearly twenty-four hours, and besides the blood had been steadily oozing from my wound all night.

After riding down the road a short distance I came to the steam saw-mill which we had passed the day before on our way out. Little fires with squads of men gathered around them were burning all about this mill, and I determined to dismount there and rest. Riding up to a man who stood by the side of the road next the mill I asked him to assist me from the saddle, for I was fearful of falling if I attempted it unaided. Without a word he stepped readily up and putting his hands on his hips braced himself so that I might lean on his shoulders. As I reached the ground I looked up in his face, and to my surprise recognized Chaplain Harry Hopkins.

Chaplain Hopkins was a particular friend of Chaplain Joe Twitchell's, and resembled him in kindness of heart and readiness to render assistance to those needing it. He seemed greatly pleased that I had fallen into his hands and did all he possibly could for my comfort. His first act was to dress my wound, and

for want of more suitable material or because he thought it the most suitable, he folded and placed next the bullet holes, a fine silk handkerchief. Then with his own hands he prepared and broiled for me a choice piece of steak, which he had a short time before received as his share of a Confederate bullock captured and slaughtered near the mill. With this broiled beef he set before me the contents of his haversack. I was very hungry and I yet remember that meal as one of the most appreciated of my life.

After the meal was over he prepared a sort of bed for me, in the sawdust, and I lay down and watched our ambulances and army wagons coming in and passing along the road, which was lighted up by the fires I have mentioned. At length small bodies of infantry began to pass and then three or four light batteries came thundering in with their horses on a lively trot; and after the batteries came several squadrons of cavalry. By this time I became thoroughly satisfied as to what was transpiring, and concluded that to go to sleep there would be to wake up in the hands of the enemy.

The troops I had seen passing were the infantry and cavalry pickets, which indicated that the main body had already fallen back. I soon explained to the chaplain what I thought of the situation, after which he assisted me to mount, and I started for our old camp. It was a most tedious ride and I was obliged to dismount and rest several times, but at half past four P. M., I reached our division hospitals in rear of the works from which we had been withdrawn on the 24th. Two hours later the regiment moved past and several members of it came in to see me.

Captain Benedict who I had supposed was wounded and captured when we ran into the enemy's line, had turned up all right and rejoined the regiment. Lieutenants Carmick, Holbert and Bradley had been wounded, and our brave representative of "Old Erin," Captain James Finnigan, had been killed.

Major Murray had not been seen or heard from and all were satisfied that he had again fallen into the hands of the enemy, and this opinion was subsequently confirmed. He never returned to duty with the regiment. Fortunately the rank and file had

not suffered in the same ratio as the officers, for when the regiment passed the hospital it was but twenty-five muskets short of the number it started out with, and it was expected that several of the absent men would answer at roll call the next morning.

On the morning of the 29th I had an opportunity to question our officers regarding the doings of the regiment after I was wounded. The charge General de Trobriand had ordered was not made, and no one seemed to know that such a thing had been contemplated, and one of the number suggested that perhaps after all it was a good thing for the regiment that I had been disabled. He thought we might *possibly* have taken the guns, but that it could have been done only at a fearful cost and, he added as if to qualify his first conclusion, "you would in all probability have been killed instead of wounded."

The efforts of the enemy to force a passage down the road entrusted to the 124th did not, I was informed, cease with the failure of the charge they attempted to make just before I was wounded. Half an hour later their battle line again emerged from the woods and with a charging shout started across the open field. The sharpshooters had meantime taken position on the right of the 124th, prolonging the line in that direction. But just at the critical moment Kirwin's powerful regiment, armed with repeating rifles from which they claimed sixteen cartridges could be fired in less than a minute, reached the scene of action, and rushing forward—as the sharpshooters had done on their arrival—filled the gaps in the loose battle line already engaged; and adding their fire to that of my brave boys, speedily sent the charging Confederates to the right about, and tumbled them right and left, as with rapid strides they hastened back into the woods.

After that the enemy did not again appear in force, but an occasional bullet went whistling past, and every few moments a shell or two fired from his battery, which had evidently been withdrawn to a respectable distance, tore its way through the limbs over their heads.

Kirwin's regiment was withdrawn just before dark but the

124th remained where I left it until nearly ten P. M. when it was marched rapidly back to the Vaughan road, where they bivouacked until noon the next day, when the march was resumed; and at six P. M. they were busy pitching their tents on the camp they had been withdrawn from on the 21th.

LIST OF KILLED, AND WOUNDED OF 124TH, IN FRONT OF PETERSBURG FROM AUGUST 20 TO OCTOBER [illegible] 1864.

Aug. 20	Private James Daniels,	Co. C.....	Wounded.
Sept. 10	Private George G. King,	" C.....	Killed.
" 12	" Joseph Pratt,	" B.....	Wounded.
" 14	Corp. Chester Judson,	" C.....	Killed.
" 15	Private Martin V. Campbell,	" B.....	"
Oct. 9	Private Grant B. Benjamin,	" G.....	"
" 10	" B. M. Little,	" B.....	Wounded.
" 20	" Theodore Smith,	" A.....	"
" 22	Lieut. Jonathan Birdsall,	" A.....	Killed.

CASUALTIES OF 124TH AT BATTLE OF BOYDTON ROAD, OCTOBER 27, 1864.

Lieut. Colonel C. H. Weygant,.....	.....	Wounded.
Major Henry S. Murray,.....	.....	Wounded and Captured.
Capt. James Finnigan,	Co. C.....	Killed.
Lieut. E. J. Carmick,	Co. F.....	Wounded.
" Ebenezer Holbert,	" D.....	"
" Thomas W. Bradley,	" B.....	"
Sergt. Clark B. Gallation.	Co. H.....	Wounded and Captured.
Private Francis Quinn,	" H.....	" " "
" James Smith,	" B.....	" " "
Corp. David U. Quick,	" K.....	Wounded.
Private Thomas Griffith,	" B.....	"
" Peter Herman,	" C.....	"
" Henry Drilling,	" C.....	"
" Charles Timerson,	" H.....	"
" Walter D. Boyce,	" I.....	"
" Henry R. Broadhead,	" F.....	Killed.
" Robert H. Folley,	" C.....	"
" William H. Dougherty,	" E.....	Captured.
" William Milliken,	" I.....	"
" Jeduthan Millspaugh,	" I.....	"

CHAPTER XX.

REINFORCED,—WELDON RAID,—IN WINTER QUARTERS.

ON the 30th day of October I received a furlough and started for the North. On reaching my home at Newburgh I found awaiting me the following letter from Captain Benedict, the senior officer with the regiment.

"124TH N. Y. V., OCT. 30, 1864.

"MY DEAR COLONEL:—

In great haste I send you a few lines. I have just returned from disinterring the body of Captain Finnigan. An orderly rode in camp with me bringing an order to march at dark. Capt. Malone with his company, —87 men and Lieut. King—arrived last night. They have been put in Companies K. and E., and a few of them in other companies where they have relatives. Where we are going to no one knows—whether into the front line, to some other camp, to march or fight is all surmise."

"Later—We are ordered into the front lines to-night and as your bay mare may not be safe from mortar shells I will send her to Post who says he will see that she is properly cared for, and take all the blame should anything happen her before you return. Travis sends regards. Let me hear from you soon and often.

JAMES W. BENEDICT."

Two days later I received the following letter from Captain Travis, the next officer in rank to Captain Benedict:

"124TH N. Y. V., NOV. 3, 1864.

"DEAR COLONEL—I thought I would write a few lines to let you know that I am yet in the land of the living, and that we at present occupy the grounds laid out by you for our new camp. Everything is running as smoothly as possible but we all wish for your return. As for the new company, they have arrived. We gave Malone a full company; the rest were sent to Company E., except six. Four of these went to C. and the other two to F. The old regiment looks big again. We have sent for arms and expect them here to-morrow. Captain Finnigan's body has been

sent home. If any of his friends speak to you in regard to refunding the money it cost us, it is $133, and you are authorized to receive it for us. Do not mention it to them unless they speak first about it to you. Post has taken charge of your bay mare but I have kept your little brown for my own use. If I attempt to ride her they will have to start very soon. There is a rumor that Hancock leaves the corps, and that Gibbons takes command. Come back as soon as you can.

From your friend,

HARRY TRAVIS."

Hancock did leave the corps about that date because of physical difficulties arising from wounds received in battle, but Major-General Humphreys, instead of Gibbon, took his place.

My wound did not entirely heal for several months, but its worst effects wore away quite rapidly and on the 22d of November I was with the regiment again. During my absence there had arrived, in addition to Captain Malone's men, a considerable number of recruits.

I was much pleased with the general appearance of these new men; and was most agreeably surprised when, on taking the regiment out on battalion drill, I failed to discover a half dozen "awkward recruits" in the entire number. I afterward learned that not a few of them had been in the service three years before they joined the 124th, and that nearly every one of them had been members of regiments whose terms of service had expired. Captain Malone and Lieutenant King showed by their every action that they were experienced officers; and I felt thoroughly satisfied that I had nothing to fear when the regiment should again be called into action, from these veteran recruits.

Just before my return to the front I visited our State capital and procured from His Honor Governor Seymour,

A Captain's Commission	for	Lieutenant	Thomas Taft,	who	was	assigned	to	C.
" "	"	"	E. J. Carmick,	"	"	"		F
" "	"	"	Thomas W. Bradley,	"	"	"		B.
A First Lieut.	"	" Orderly Sergt.	John C. Wood,	"	"	"		A
" Second "	"	" "	Woodward T. Ogden,	"	"	"		K.
" "	"	"	Sergeant Thomas Hart,	"	"	"		A.
" "	"	"	" David U. Quick,	"	"	"		B.
" "	"	"	Sergt. Major Thos. G. Mabie,	"	"	"		D.

At an inspection held on the afternoon of November 25th the regiment turned out nineteen officers and three hundred and sixty-two enlisted men—a larger number than we had mustered for duty at any time since we moved into action on the bloody battlefield of Chancellorsville. The following is a list of the gains of the regiment subsequent to the opening of our campaign under Grant. They had all, with the exception of about twenty, joined the regiment after the battle of Boydton Road.

CAPT. ROBERT A. MALONE	Company K	William Edsall	Company D
LIEUT. JOHN S. KING	" K	Peter Byrne	" D
Daniel D. Carpenter	Company A	Patrick Connelly	" D
Thomas Derwin	" A	Thomas Collins	" D
Henry Ladue	" A	Charles Barltson	" D
William L. McNitt	" A	Amos De Long	" D
Robert Perry	" A	William A. Trainer	" D
William H. Retalic	" A	William Munroe	" D
Lemuel R. Robertson	" A	Johnson Munroe	" D
John H. Johnson	" A	Charles Morgan	" D
David H. Wheeler	" A	John Johnson	" D
James L. Johnson	" A	Michael Welch	" D
John P. Burkhart	" A	William Rouke	" D
George Mason	" A	Joel H. Brown	" D
John Clancy	Company B	Thomas G. Holmes	" D
Thomas Griffith	" B	Albert Bigler	" D
James Hamilton	" B	John Curray	" D
John Parker	" B	George Davis	" D
John Raffin	" B	Isaac Keith	Company E
John W. Garrison	" B	Peter Brickey	" E
Charles Wannemaker	" B	John Hoifler	" E
Luke Petitt	Company C	Isaiah Booz	" E
John Ruby	" C	Furman Furman	" E
George Stickney	" C	Charles Centebar	" E
William L. Bonwell	" C	William Cole	" E
Richard Blunt	" C	William M. Dean	" E
William Beteker	" C	Charles M. Evert	" E
John Dougherty	" C	Peter O. Favero	" E
Michael Brown	" C	Edward Kelly	" E
Henry Drilling	" C	Andrew Lafontain	" E
George Dold	" C	John Moor	" E
Lewis Ewalt	" C	Joseph McCullock	" E
Peter Herman	" C	Frederick E. Norton	" E
William H. Finch	" C	Samuel S. Stockwell	" E
Casper Aisale	" C	Joel H. Tracey	" E
Jacob Beck	" C	James Salsbury	" E
John Seymour	" C	Joseph Wells	" E
John A. Travis	Company D	James E. Winters	" E
Erastus Dill	" D	Amos Winters	" E
Henry S. Utter	" D	William W. Wright	" E
Jeremiah Daily	" D	Silas Wade	" E

Cyrus J. Blackman.....Company E
John Madden..... ..... " E
Philetus Lomis..... .. " E
William Davis..... " E
Harvey Conklin.....Company F
Alva Hough..... " F
James Stack..... " F
Martin Coval..... " F
Edward Earl..... Company G
William S. Smith..... " G
Charles E. Brown.....Company H
John E. Hurder..... " H
John Murphy..... ..... " H
Joseph T. Smith..... .... " H
John P. Trant..... " H
Francis Quinn ... . " H
Charles Timerson..... " H
Sylvanus Lang..... ..... " H
Charles O. Goodyear.....Company I
John Anderson..... " I
Cornelius Brussie..... " I
Emanuel Bateman..... " I
Allen R. Billings..... " I
George Cannavan..... " I
William Emmons..... " I
Homer Hayes..... " I
William McGulphen..... " I
Franklin Reilly..... ..... " I
Thomas Reilly .. .. " I
Joseph Rose..... .... " I
John Ryan..... " I
Horace A. Smith..... ... " I
Walter D. Boyce..... ..... " I
William Hatfield..... " I
James A. Benton. ... . " I
David Babcock.....Company K
James H. Brush..... " K
John E. Beard..... " K
James E. Braisted..... " K
John Bishop..... ..... " K
George W. Brown..... ..... " K
William Bennett..... ... " K
Harvey Brush..... " K
Charles Cable..... .. " K
Josiah Conklin..... ..... " K
Michael Callahan..... " K
George Conklin..... ..... " K
Samuel Call..... " K
Nicholas K. Crotty..... . " K
Abraham J. Cronk..... " K
Andrew W. Conklin..... " K
Moses C. Conklin..... " K
Daniel Conklin..... " K

Edward De Hart..... ....Company K
John De Hart.. ..... " K
William Dolan..... . ..... " K
Solomon Davenport..... " K
Seth M. Davey..... " K
Geo. W. Elliston..... " K
John Farrell..... ..... " K
Rineer Fisher..... " K
John Flynn..... " K
Samuel F. Fredericks..... " K
Benjamin W. Halstead.. .. " K
George L. Howard..... " K
James Helms..... . .. " K
Joseph Hunt... ..... " K
Rufus S. Hoyt..... " K
Charles Johnson..... " K
Joseph D. Jackson..... " K
Josiah Jaycox..... " K
William H. Lewis..... ... ... " K
Samuel Lewis..... " K
James Lynn..... " K
Philip Lehning..... " K
Isaac Logan..... " K
Edward Meyer..... " K
Thomas H. Moore..... " K
Henry L. Miller..... " K
George F. Mathews..... " K
William H. Monell... ..... " K
Jacob J. Nichols..... " K
Alexander R. Olds..... " K
George J. O'Reilly..... ..... " K
John Petrey..... " K
Joseph P. Romer..... " K
Benjamin P. Romer..... ... " K
Gilbert E. Robbins..... " K
William Reed..... " K
John Reed..... " K
George H. Roberson..... ..... " K
David Storms..... " K
Moses Schofield..... " K
Edward Stafford..... ..... " K
James T. Lacey..... " K
John S. Sanders..... " K
John S. Shaw..... ..... " K
John Smith ..... " K
William E. Tucker..... " K
John J. Terwilliger..... " K
William Whalen..... " K
James H. Wood..... ... " K
Henry Wilkinson..... " K
John Wallace..... " K
Peter Winters..... " K
Israel H. Wickham..... " K

On the afternoon of November 29th the troops of Mott's command were instructed to pack up and remain in readiness to move at a moment's notice. It was currently rumored that we had been ordered to a new camping ground, somewhere in the rear, on which we were to erect permanent winter quarters. Just after sundown a division of Ninth Corps troops came marching up in perfect order, with drums beating, and banners flying, ready to relieve us from duty in the trenches and occupy the camps we were about to vacate.

Their arrival was observed by the enemy, who forthwith opened a furious cannonade which lasted for an hour or more; during which the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel Stafford of the 86th was mortally wounded, and the incoming division had some fifteen or twenty men killed or disabled. In the evening our division quietly withdrew, moved about a mile to the rear and bivouacked for the night.

At sunrise on the 30th we resumed the march and at the end of about six miles reached our flank or rear line of works near Poplar Grove church, where de Trobriand's brigade was given position and ordered to camp between Forts Cummings and Seebert. The weather was now so cold that the men found it next to impossible to sleep comfortably on the ground under their thin muslin shelters; but day after day passed without bringing us the anxiously looked for permission to erect winter quarters; and the men without orders began putting log walls under their tent pieces and erecting log bunks.

An entry in my journal under date of Nov. 5th reads—"I am now able to mount my horse without assistance. Before ten A. M. and after three P. M. I am usually with the regiment. The intervening time I spend at court-martial. Yesterday our court tried a poor fellow for his life and virtually pronounced the death sentence against him in less than forty minutes. I was the presiding officer, and the only member of the court who voted a less sentence than that fatal one to which I have several times of late affixed my signature, beginning with,—"*That he be shot to death.*" . . . "We are encamped in the rear line of works near the Southal

house, and not far from Reams Station. For the first time in many months our camp is out of sight of the enemy and for nearly a week I have not heard the sound of a passing shell, nor the whistle of a bullet. We are on high ground and will I hope soon receive orders to erect permanent winter quarters here. A statement just received from my ordnance clerk C. C. Lutes, shows that from the 14th of October to the 29th of November the regiment expended 122,870 rounds of ammunition. A hundred thousand rounds of this were expended on the picket line during the month of November. Our picket detail for that period did not average daily over eighty men. Making a liberal deduction for waste, each picket, it would seem, expended full forty rounds daily. The only casualties reported by reason of shell or bullets during the month were the wounding of Private John Anderson of I, and William Reid of K. Now the enemy posted opposite the line picketed by the 124th during this period must have expended almost as much ammunition as our men. If put to my oath and asked the question 'How many rounds of this vast amount of ammunition do you think was actually fired at a human being by your men or by the enemy opposite them?' I should unhesitatingly answer— 'Not one.'"

At 11.30 P. M. on the 6th of November I was awakened to read a circular order which contained the following, "You will have your command in readiness to move at daybreak with four days' rations and sixty rounds of ammunition on the person." An hour later there came another order directing the various regiments of our brigade to assemble, without further notice, in front of General de Trobriand's headquarters at four o'clock A. M.

We moved out of camp a quarter of an hour ahead of the time designated and soon reached and stacked arms in front of the General's quarters. Three regiments had preceded us and we were soon joined by the others. The General appeared at four o'clock precisely dressed in his fighting suit, and followed by his staff and an unusually large number of orderlies; and without halting or even drawing his sword—an omission very unusual with him—shouted the one word "Forward" and led us off toward

the left of the Union line. At the end of a march of five miles, we reached the Yellow Tavern Here we halted, and stacking arms rested for two hours, during which we were joined by General Mott with the other brigades of his division.

In marching to this point we passed by several Fifth Corps brigade camps, the log cabins of which were roofless and empty. Columns of troops and long trains of army wagons were moving hither and thither over the plains about us. A general movement of no little importance was evidently in progress. My men as usual, on such occasions, sat down in groups by the gun stacks and began exchanging opinions as to "what was up." Some thought a general assault against a weak point in the enemy's lines was intended, but others replied that there was altogether too much of a fuss for that.

Presently three or four light batteries, followed by a number of ambulances belonging to the cavalry, went clattering past, and were driven out the Jerusalem plank road. A little later a wounded cavalryman rode in over the same road and reported that he had been shot about daylight in a skirmish near the Notaway river, and that in riding back he had passed the advance division of the Fifth Corps boys, which he found cooking coffee along the road where they had halted for breakfast, full ten miles out. At length our brigade bugler sounded the "forward" and the head of our column, like the batteries and ambulances referred to, started out the Jerusalem plank road, on what has since been named the "Weldon Raid."

This expedition consisted of the Fifth Corps with Mott's division of the Second, and Gregg's Cavalry division. It was commanded by General Warren, and was sent out from Meade's left to destroy the Weldon railroad farther southward, and thus prevent its use by the enemy in transporting supplies from North Carolina nearly up to our lines whence they were wagoned around the Union left to Lee's camps. It occupied our time just a week; and a few days after our return to the Petersburg lines Lewis T. Shultz, the praying-fighting sergeant of Company G. who had recently been dubbed "Regimental Poet," handed me a neatly

written and rather lengthy document which proved to be a detailed account of our recent expedition. It now lies before me and I will send it to the printer with the simple statement that the scenes described therein were only too true, but that the 124th took no part in firing the buildings.

"THE WELDON RAID."

By L. T. Shultz, 124th N. Y. Vols.

The day was Seventh, and Twelfth the month, of eighteen sixty-four,
At early dawn we took our march, as oft we had before;
For what or where no one could guess, Grant keeps his tho'ts so well,
But day by day revealed the plan, and I'll the story tell.

We took a straight and noted route, the "Jerusalem Plank Road,"
The Fifth Corps first, then we of course, again must share the load;
For our Division you all know well, has done its part or more,
And here I'll say we're better known as the "famous old Third Corps."

The first day passed, and twenty miles from Camp we halt to stay,
And spend the night, securely crossed the river Notaway;
But many fell out on our march, and slept beside the road,
Their feet so sore and shoulders pained, by soldier's heavy load.

The night was wet, but bright the morn, so on our course we bent,
A thousand scenes both new and old, to greet us as we went:
And here the soldiers' fun began, to plunder rebel farms,
With sweet potatoes, chickens, lambs and turkeys filled their arms.

Our column on with grandest march, thro' fields and wood made way,
Nor rebel force could once impede the progress of that day:
Gregg's chargers took our front and flanks, and made the Rebels fly,
While our host their columns pressed, to help them by and by.

The "Sussex Court House" soon we passed, and many dwellings too,
Yet scarce a white man could be seen, old rebels though a few;
But there were women white and black, and children by the score;
The first part scorned, the second smiled, to see our Flag once more.

Just here it was some Yankee Boys, of whiskey got a smell,
They quickly found its whereabouts, and helped themselves full well;
Themselves they filled—their canteens too, and drank with chums their health,
Unconscious, then laid down and slept, till waked by Rebel stealth.

But common were the scenes that day, presented to our sight,
At eve we struck the "Weldon Road," and bivouacked for night;
Ten thousand fires with rails were made, the wind so cold and strong,
"Kings Corn" and "Cotton," Stations, Tanks and Bridges blazed along.

And then the sound of cheering hosts and thrilling iron stroke,
Came up to say the Fifth Corps Boys to active scenes had woke;
Five miles of track that eve they spoiled, then rested on the ground,
Nor could we sleep, so chill the night, till morning came around.

With beef supplied and breakfast o'er, at day we joined the fun,
So strong our force, and long our line, the track was overrun;
With mighty lifts and lusty cheers, we turned it upside down,
Then burnt the ties and bent the rails, nor feared the Rebels frown.

Three times the whole length changed along, each time its length destroyed.
With Mott's command beyond 'Three Creek,' most heartily employed;
And this the last and farthest work the Infantry should do,
At midnight hour we countermarched, and bid the flames be true.

A stormy freezing night we passed, mid icy foliage damp,
The question was which way we'd go, towards Weldon or to camp;
But Warren sent his orders out, as near as I could learn,
To say that all required was done, and now we should return.

Hurrah for camp, our home is this, but O! who can endure,
The march so long, the "mud" so deep, and little rest besure;
But Rebel force was gathering strong and fighting at our backs,
So every man, through thick and thin, made wide and hasty tracks.

Half rations drawn and ate at morn, was all the fare that day,
Except the produce and the stock "smouched on" upon the way:
And thus it was another day, the soldiers did complain,
Till coming near the "Notaway," we met a "supply train."

Twas Sunday now, and called at home, the "best day of the seven,"
But here it only bears the name, bereft of all its Heaven;
And horrid sights this day we met, too painful to relate,
But Truth must now defend its cause, and show the Rebel's hate.

Beyond the Sussex Court House 'twas, as on our way returning,
We found some Union Soldiers dead, we thus our foes are learning;
Their ghastly look and naked form was shocking to behold,
While fearful wounds of knife and ball the Rebel's feeling told.

The murderers soon were found to be the dwellers by the way,
Who though exempt from Rebel drafts, guerrillas were that day ;
Such is the foe we have to fight, wherever we are sent,
Shame on the man who'd "treat for peace," with such till they repent.

At one large house, a Sergeant slain, was found beneath the floor,
The murderers quickly took the hint, and hid inside the door ;
The easiest way to find them out was just to burn the dwelling,
Then soon they showed their guilty heads, the fire some guns exploding.

These sights, their brother soldier's blood, with vengeance caused to boil,
Such fiendish acts, on Rebel heads, they swore should now recoil ;
True—every house both large and small was thrown in wild disorder,
As each in turn to ashes went, by Gen. Warren's "order."

A constant scene of burning homes, for twenty miles and more,
Was deemed by those who bore the grief, retaliation sore ;
But justice says the Union must protect the Sons she loves,
Nor can we crush this treason out "by handling it with gloves."

'Twas hard to hear the mothers plead, with children round them clinging,
And see the flames devour those homes, where once was joy and singing ;
Those mansions large with grounds arranged, and rooms to suit their zest,
Told what a happy group lived there, while in the Union blest.

But justice stern demands this course, the Union cause to aid,
And that our foes be taught their crime, example must be made ;
Our fault 'tis not, but Rebels great, responsible must be,
For all the sufferings, theirs and ours, and for their slaves set free.

One act I saw with deep regret, performed by soldier's hand.
The burning of a House of God ; It was not contraband ;
Our Colonel ordered out the fire, just as it was beginning,
But other men by theirs were told, again to set it blazing.

Thus Sunday went and Monday came, nor ceased the scene of fire,
Till coming near the Union line, the "order" did expire ;
And bleeding feet, while marching bare, on frozen rain and ground.
Attest the spirit of our men, while making this "grand round."

'Twas just a week before we left, we moved out on this line,
And builded houses most complete, to stay the winter time ;
But on returning near that camp, how did the soldiers scold,
To find us cheated of our homes, and "left out in the cold."

And now our place is on the flank, away outside the line,
We cleared the ground, laid out the streets, and built a camp most fine;
So here on "guard, fatigue and picket," we'll await the spring campaign,
Then with three hundred thousand more, the Rebels fight again.

About this raid I wish to say, we had a leader new,
So long by glorious Hancock led, (like him there are but few,)
His splendid form and speaking look, we never shall forget,
Nor many scenes of brilliant fame, where he and we have met.

About it too I wish to say, brave Warren did command,
And with what wisdom and success, is known through all the land;
Nor can I tell who most to praise, for officers and men,
Excepting those who always "beat," did well their duty then.

Now while we fight, let's hope and trust in God, who helps the right,
Nor think our prayers with swearing mix'd can claim His favor's might,
Our cause is just, our War is right, the Union to restore,
Nor will it cease till waves our flag through all the land once more.

My story's told, rejoice our Land, for Lincoln re-elected,
Our Country and our President, divinely be protected;
Our Army and our Navy, too, to both be glory paid,
Successful may they ever be, as was the WELL-DONE-RAID.

The total casualties reported by the 124th during the Weldon Raid were the wounding of John F. Meyers of F. and the loss of Enos Jenkins of Co. A, who while on duty at brigade headquarters as a mounted orderly, was captured by guerrillas one dark night within twenty rods of General de Trobriand's headquarters.

The new camping ground on which we at last received orders to erect winter quarters was located about forty rods in advance of the Union line of breastworks, and almost directly in front of the camp we had vacated on the 7th. There was an extensive pine woods near at hand, and at the end of a week we settled down for the winter in as comfortable and fine looking log cabins as were to be found in any camp in the corps.

On our return from the Weldon Raid, I received through brigade headquarters, a small package accompanied by several official documents, the most important of which read as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON, NOV. 28, 1864.

SIR:—Herewith I enclose the MEDAL OF HONOR, which has been awarded you by the Secretary of War, under the Resolution of Congress, approved July 12, 1862, "To provide for the presentation of 'Medals of Honor' to the enlisted men of the army and volunteer forces who have distinguished or may distinguish themselves in battle during the present rebellion.

Please acknowledge the receipt of it.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,

E. D. TOWNSEND, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*

To Private ARCHIBALD FREEMAN, Company E. 124th N. Y. Vols.

These medals of honor were never presented for any less meritorious action than the capture of a Confederate battle flag, and with this one, which was the first I had ever seen, there came a special order designating the 15th as the day on which it should be formally presented in presence of the entire brigade. The presentation was duly made and *Sergeant* Archibald Freeman became for the time being the envied hero of de Trobriand's command.

About Christmas, we received from the "Ladies of Orange" a case containing upwards of five hundred sleeping caps, which were greatly appreciated by all, not only for the the reason that they added to our comfort, but because they assured us that our sacrifices and sufferings for our country were appreciated, and that we were yet kindly remembered by friends from whom many of us had been long separated. Accompaning this case of sleeping caps there came from a warm friend of the regiment this note:

GOSHEN, DEC. 19, 1864.

COLONEL WEYGANT—Dear Sir:—

I have this day packed and shipped to you per express, by order of the ladies, one box containing five hundred and thirty sleeping caps for your regiment. While the ladies of the different towns have worked with a hearty good will, you may attribute a large share of your indebtedness to Mrs. Dr. Jane, of Florida, who has evidently been the moving power.

Yours, etc.,

F. H. REEVS.

The month of January, 1865, was devoted by officers and men in every branch of the service to the making of most thorough preparations for an aggressive spring campaign. The building of earthworks and digging of trenches, so far as our corps was concerned, almost entirely ceased. The usual picket duty could not of course be discontinued, but the opposing lines, in front of where our brigade was lying, were half a mile or more apart, and the dread sounds of enemies' bullets were no longer heard in our camps. Drilling by squad, company, battalion, and brigade was resumed, and inspections and reviews were of frequent occurrence. Convalescents returned to duty almost daily. Early in the month, his honor Governor Fenton, on recommendation of our brigade division and corps commanders, issued a Colonel's commission, to Lieutenant-Colonel C. H. Weygant, a Lieutenant-Colonel's commission to Major H. S. Murray, and a Major's commission to Captain James W. Benedict.

But Murray unfortunately remained a prisoner of war; and Benedict, though always thereafter our acting Lieutenant-Colonel, preferred to serve out his time and return to his home if his life were spared, captain of what might be left of the gallant company he had brought with him to the field.

On or about the last day of January Adjutant Van Houten resigned and I appointed Lieutenant John S. King of Company K. acting adjutant in his stead.

On the 4th day of February we received notice to prepare for a march. Another demonstration against the enemy's right had been ordered, and the next morning the Fifth and Second Corps, preceded by Gregg's division of cavalry, pushed out to Ream's Station, and thence to Dinwiddie C. H.; the Fifth Corps being directed to turn the rebel right while the Second assailed in front.

At half past four o'clock A. M. on the 5th the camp of the 124th had lost its accustomed tidy and comfortable appearance. The muslin shelters had been stripped from the roof-poles and once more strapped fast to the well filled knapsacks of their owners. Cartridge boxes containing forty rounds of fresh ammuni-

tion were hanging from the gun stacks, while haversacks filled with hard bread, salt pork, sugar and coffee, were piled about them; and surplus clothing, old shoes and odds and ends of all kinds, that could not be carried on the person, were scattered in profusion over the bunks and floors of the roofless log cabins, in which little groups of men were gathered about smoking and smouldering fires, waiting for the sound of the assembly.

At seven A. M. our brigade column was formed, and after marching to the left about two miles, we were halted in rear of Mead's most advanced infantry picket posts. But this halt, we soon learned, was only for the purpose of forming battle line and deploying a regiment as skirmishers. As soon as this change in our formation was completed we moved forward again, passing over the Union picket line toward that of the enemy, which was soon reached, and speedily driven back by our skirmishers, a mile or more, to a small stream called Hatcher's Run. On the further side of this stream about a hundred Confederates rallied behind a light line of works and brought our skirmishers to a stand; whereupon a regiment from the left of De Trobriand's line (the 124th was on the right) was hurried forward to assist the skirmishers who, as soon as reinforced, charged across the stream, carried the works, and took about twenty prisoners.

The brigade forded the run in battle line, and pushed on about three-quarters of a mile, when our skirmishers were again brought to a halt by a volley from troops posted behind the enemy's main line of works. Here General de Trobriand took up a strong position and set his men to building a corresponding line. While engaged with picks and shovels, we heard the thunder of battle away off to our left.

Our brigade worked unmolested all day; and at night we lay down to rest behind most formidable earthworks. The remaining brigades of Mott's division had moved up on our left, and spent the day, as our brigade had done, covering their front. Just about dark, the elated foe having forced back Warren's command, hurled a heavy column against the left of Mott's intrenched line, striking that part of it held by McAllister's

Jersey brigade; but the brave Jerseymen were prepared to receive, and speedily repelled their assault, inflicting heavy loss on the assailants.

About three A. M. on the 6th our brigade was relieved by a portion of the Fifth Corps, after which we moved to the left about half a mile and massed in a ravine in rear of McAllister's line. The sky had clouded during the night and shortly after we reached this ravine a cold rain storm set in. The men were allowed to build small fires, but the slight benefit derived from the heat they sent out was more than counterbalanced by the disagreeable effects of the strong smoke which almost blinded us. My own eyes were soon so swollen that I could not shut them. Very few of the men had rubber blankets and were consequently wet to the skin, and as they groped their way about, their teeth chattered so that they could not speak distinctly. It was a day throughout which we all suffered terribly, but nobody grumbled, for there occasionally came to us from our left a sound which told very plainly that others were suffering even more than we. That night we learned that the Fifth Corps and cavalry had been attacked in flank and suffered a loss of over two thousand men, but that Hancock's command had been able to hold every foot of ground it had taken, repulsing several determined assaults; and that the Union line had been permanently extended across Hatcher's Run.

On the morning of the 9th our brigade moved about a mile to the right and was assigned a position in this new line. We spent the day erecting heavy breastworks and felling the trees and shrubs in our front for a distance of at least six hundred yards. When this was accomplished the men went to work with a will clearing grounds for a camp behind the works, and preparing for the erection of new log cabins. On the morning of the 11th an order was received forbidding the erection of winter quarters and directing the pitching of muslin shelters on the ground. For a week my men had suffered terribly from cold and exposure without a word of complaint, but this order was received with frowns and in some instances blasphemous grumblings. But fortunately, on the morning of the 12th it was

rescinded, and at the end of a week we were all comfortably housed again.

GAINS.

About the first of March the 1st Regiment of U. S. Sharpshooters was disbanded, because of the expiration of the term of a large number who had failed to re-enlist. The recruits together with those who had re-enlisted, were sent to such regiments as they individually chose to select. Twenty-one of these came to the 124th and were assigned, at their especial request, to Company H., which was then and ever after commanded by Captain Theodore M. Roberson, one of the bravest young officers in the regiment. About the same time several recruits from New-York joined us. The following is a list of all their names.

Lieut. Sylvestor Lawson	Company	H	Henry Jubin	Company	H
Corp. Marvin Hilebrant	"	H	Byron J. Pullman	"	H
Corp. Charles T. Thompson	"	H	Cornelius Pullman	"	H
Corp. Isaac Smith	"	H	Douglass Pullman	"	H
Corp. Martin Nichols	"	H	Philip Servis	"	H
Andrew Westervelt	"	H	Alonzo Voorhees	"	H
Charles C. Hicks	"	H	Charles Webster	"	H
John Fisk	"	H	James Couhig	Company	C
Orrin E. Dotey	"	H	Edward Brownson	"	C
Charles H. Berner	"	H	Neal Smith	"	G
Henry C. Conklin	"	H	Joseph Shaw	"	G
Edward F. Dunn	"	H	George Lock	"	G
Henry C. Ecker	"	H	William Bowery	"	K
Aaron Fuller	"	H			

LOSSES.

From the 1st of May, 1864, to the 25th of March, 1865, our permanent losses in addition to those by death on the battle-field, which have already been given, were as follows:

BY DISCHARGE.

Colonel Francis M. Cummins.			John H. Blair	Company	C
Captain Charles B. Wood			Charles C. Knapp	"	C
Captain William E. Mapes.			William Ronk	"	D
Captain Ira S. Bush.			Edward Glenn	"	E
Adjutant William B. Van Houten.			Ransom Wilcox	"	F
Lieutenant John W. Houston.			William H. Dawson	"	H
Lieutenant Lewis M. Wisner.			Francis Quinn	"	H
Ord. Sergt. Joshua V. Cole	Company	G	Patrick Keane	"	I
Martin Everett	"	B	John Studor	"	K
Mathias T. Holbert	"	B	Sylvanus Grier	"	K

BY DEATH IN HOSPITALS.

LIEUT. CHAS. T. CRISSEY,	A	Fever.	James Ryerson,	D	H't dis.
ORD. SERGT. W. W. Parsons,	K	Wounds.	Joel H. Brown,	D	Diarrhea.
SERGT. Watson W. Ritch,	K	"	John A. Travis,	D	"
SERGT. Sanford T. Estabrook,	G	"	Thomas P. Powell,	D	S. Pox.
SERGT. Isaac Decker,	G	"	Horace Wheeler,	E	Fever.
SERGT. A. T. Vanderlyn,	I	"	Ferman Ferman,	E	"
CORP. John C. Vermilye,	K	"	Martin Covall,	F	Fever.
CORP. A. W. Lamereaux,	E	"	Garret H. Bennett,	G	Wounds
Daniel Ackerman,	A	"	Nathan W. Parker,	G	"
George Mason,	A	Fever.	Isaac W. Parker,	G	In prison.
John W. Casey,	B	Diarrhea.	James Crist,	H	"
Matthew Crowley,	B	Wounds.	William S. M. Hatch,	H	"
Daniel Babcock,	B	"	Lyman Fairchild,	H	Wounds.
William Slauson,	B	Diarrhea.	Edward Hunter,	H	"
Chas. P. F. Fisher,	C	In prison.	Charles Timerson,	H	Fever.
Frederick Lamereaux,	C	Fever.	Giles Curran,	I	Wounds.
George Dall,	C	"	Henry Losey,	I	In prison
Henry Drilling,	C	Wounds.	Anthony Price,	K	Diarrhea.
Michael McMorris,	D	"	John Wallace,	K	Fever.
Jeremiah Dolson,	D	"	James H. Brush,	K	Fever.
John S. Grey,	D	Fever.			

BY TRANSFER TO VETERAN RESERVE CORPS.

SERGT. Charles H. Hull	Company	F	Garrett Decker	Company	D
CORP. Noah Kimbark	"	H	Simeon Wheat	"	E
Edward Rice	"	A	James N. Hazen	"	F
James Gavin	"	B	Jeremiah Cole	"	F
Michael Mooney	"	B	Gilbert Peet	"	G
John W. Stanton	"	B	Daniel Smith	"	G
Wesley Storms	"	B	Daniel S. White	"	G
James Lewis	"	B	Theron Bodine	"	H
Peter P. Hazen	"	C	William Dawson	"	H
Cornelius H. Holbert	"	D	Grandison Judson	"	H
Daniel Stephens	"	D	John Joyce	"	I
Gideon H. Pelton	"	D	George D. Scott	"	I
Daniel P. Dugan	"	D	Robert Mc Cartney	"	K
George W. Decker	"	D			

BY DISMISSAL.

SURGEON JOHN H. THOMPSON.*

BY TRANSFER FOR PROMOTION.

William H. Dill, of D. made Lieutenant of Colored Troops.

Norman A. Sly, of D. made Lieutenant in 152d N. Y. Vols.

BY DESERTION.

Joseph Gordon	Company	B	John Haefner	Company	E
Andrew J. Messenger	"	B	John F. Meyers	"	E
Robert Thompson	"	D	Michael Burns	"	H
Joseph Brown	"	D	Martin Brennon	"	I
James Carson	"	D	William Boodey	"	I
Michael Maloney	"	D	James Cornell	"	I

* Dr. Thompson was recommissioned but failed to re-muster.

CHAPTER XXI.

FIGHTING AT MIDNIGHT.—FALL OF PETERSBURG AND RICHMOND.

DURING the first half of the month of March, 1865, deserters by the score came into our lines nightly, telling of discouragement and demoralization in the Confederate camp. The New York papers, which were now hawked through our canvas cities as regularly as they were through the streets of the Metropolis, were filled with glowing accounts of Sheridan's victories in the Valley, Sherman's triumphant advance through the Carolinas, and Union successes in every direction. And the prospect of a speedy collapse of the Slaveholders' Rebellion, and consequent termination of the war for the preservation of the Union, became daily more and yet more apparent.

As day after day slipped by our usual drills were one after another discontinued, and the time they had occupied devoted to searching inspections and reviews; and soon general, special, and circular orders, from army, corps, division and brigade headquarters, referring to details of every conceivable nature, began to pour in upon us in almost hourly installments.

From the 14th to the 23d our time was fully occupied in pushing to absolute completion every detail relating to our preparation for what we all believed was to be our most glorious and last campaign. On the morning of the 24th we were prepared to leave our camps for good on five minutes' notice, and we rested from our labors, anxiously waiting for that sometimes dreaded but now magic word "forward." And we did not have long to wait, for though we knew it not, orders had already left General Grant's headquarters, directing a general advance on the morning of the 29th. Sheridan, with his ten thousand troopers, flushed with their victories in the Valley, and their daring achievements

about the Confederate rear, were again with the besieging army, awaiting like the rest of us, orders to advance once more against our old adversary, Lee's grand army of Northern Virginia.

A special report of effective strength of the 124th called for at noon on the 24th showed a fighting force of nearly four hundred enlisted men, all in the best of spirits and ready for the fray. And I had with me to assist in commanding and caring for these men, the following named officers, in the bravery and ability of all but two or three of whom I had the most implicit confidence.

FIELD.

ACTING LIEUTENANT COLONEL—CAPTAIN JAS. W. BENEDICT.
ACTING MAJOR—CAPTAIN HENRY F. TRAVIS.

STAFF.

SURGEON—MAJOR R. V. K. MONTFORT. | CHAPLAIN—CAPTAIN T. SCOTT BRADNER.
ASST. SURGEON—LIEUT. EDWARD C. FOX. | QUARTERMASTER—LIEUT. ELLIS A. POST.
ACTING ADJUTANT—LIEUT. JOHN S. KING.

LINE.

CAPTAIN JOHN C. WOOD, Commanding.....Company A
FIRST LIEUTENANT THOMAS HART with..... " A

FIRST LIEUTENANT DAVID U. QUICK Commanding.....Company B

CAPTAIN THOMAS TAFT Commanding.....Company C

FIRST LIEUTENANT EBENEZER HOLBERT, Commanding.....Company D
SECOND LIEUTENANT THOMAS G. MABIE, with..... " D

CAPTAIN DANIEL SAYER, Commanding.....Company E
FIRST LIEUTENANT WILLIAM BENJAMIN, with..... " E

CAPTAIN EDWARD J. CARMICK, Commanding.....Company F
FIRST LIEUTENANT ABRAM P. FRANCISCO, with..... " F

CAPTAIN THOMAS J. QUICK, Commanding.....Company G
SECOND LIEUTENANT LEWIS T. SHULTZ, with..... " G

CAPTAIN THEODORE M. ROBERSON, Commanding .....Company H

SECOND LIEUTENANT SYLVESTER LAWSON, Commanding .....Company I

CAPTAIN ROBERT A. MALONE, Commanding.....Company K
SECOND LIEUTENANT WOODWARD T. OGDEN, with..... " K

NON-COMMISSIONED STAFF.

SERGEANT MAJOR Andrew Armstrong. | HOSPITAL STEWARD Coe L. Reevs.
QMR. SERGEANT Geo. H. Chandler. | CHIEF BUGLER Moses P. Ross.
COMMISSARY SERGEANT W. P. Uptegrove. | CHIEF MUSICIAN J. G. Buckley.

Our only officer in the field and not with the regiment was Captain Thomas W. Bradley, who was on duty at Division headquarters, as special aid to Major General Mott.

The Confederate leaders did not however allow Grant's army to open the campaign. "General Lee—foreseeing clearly the speedy downfall of the Confederate cause unless averted by a prompt concentration of his remaining forces and a telling blow delivered thereby on some one of our encircling armies, which were now palpably crushing out the life of the rebellion—resolved to anticipate Grant's initiative by an attack on his lines before Petersburg and Richmond. This attack was made" (on the morning of the 26th) "on Fort Steedman, nearly east of Petersburg, where its success would have cut our army in two, and probably compelled a hasty concentration to recover our lines and works; thereby opening a door for the unassailed withdrawal of the rebel army southward by the most direct route, to unite with that of Johnson and thus overpower Sherman. It was delivered by Gordon with two divisions: all that was disposable of the rebel Army of Virginia being collected just behind the assaulting column and held in hand as a support. Gordon charged at daybreak; his men rushing instantly across the narrow space that here separated the confronting lines, and pouring into Fort Steedman, which was held by the 14th N. Y. Artillery, who were completely surprised and overwhelmed; part of them fleeing for their lives, while the residue were made prisoners. The guns were deserted without a struggle and immediately turned by their captors on the adjacent works, where three batteries were abandoned by the Union troops and seized by the enemy. Here their triumph ended. Their assault on Fort Haskill, next to Fort Steedman on the left, was but feebly made and easily repulsed; they failed to press forward and seize the crest of the ridge behind the forts, thus cutting our army in two; the 20,000 whom Lee had massed in their rear to support the assault either were not promptly ordered forward or failed to respond; so that their initial success had only isolated them, a comparative handful in the midst of an army of foes. In short, it was the mine ex-

plosion repeated with the parts reversed. For when our soldiers had recovered from their astonishment, and the Ninth Corps was rallied to drive the foe out—Hartranft's division making the counter assault—the rebels were too few to hold their perilous position; while the ground over which they had reached it was so swept by our guns from either side, that 2,000 preferred to surrender, rather than follow their fleeing comrades through that terrible fire. Aside from this, the loss of either army was some 2,500.

"Nor was this the extent of the enemy's mishap. General Meade, convinced that their lines generally must have been depleted to strengthen this assault, ordered an advance along the front of the Sixth and Second Corps, holding our works before Petersburg to the left of Fort Steedman; and this was made with such spirit that the thinned line of the enemy recoiled before it, and their strongly intrenched picket line was wrested from them and permanently held by their antagonists. Thus, instead of shaking himself from Grant's grip, Lee had only tightened it by this bold stroke." *

Now all we of the 124th knew at the time of the capture and recapture of Fort Steadman, consisted in our being awakened at half past three o'clock on the morning of the 25th by the distant thunder of battle. Neither did we take any active part in the capture of the enemy's strong line of picket pits along our front. The 25th day of March 1865, will nevertheless ever be to us one of the most glorious days of our existence as a regiment.

On hearing the sound of heavy and prolonged artillery firing, in and about Fort Steadman, the troops of de Trobriand's brigade, arose from their rough bunks, folded their blankets and buckled on their accoutrements. Soon orders came to strike tents, and about five A. M. the various regiments formed in battle line and manned the works in front of their respective camps. A little later the First division of our corps moved over the works at our right, and advancing rapidly over the cleared space in front reached and engaged the enemy's pickets, driving them from their

* The American Conflict, by Horace Greeley, p. 728.

pits, which were soon manned with Union troops. While this was taking place our brigade remained behind its powerful line of works, out of harm's way quietly looking on. About noon the Confederates attempted to regain the line they had been driven from in the morning, and soon made it so uncomfortable for our troops in front that reinforcements were called for. Several regiments moved out from the other brigades of our division, and at one o'clock an orderly rode into the camp of the 124th, and handed me an order which directed that I proceed forthwith with my regiment to a certain house on the picket line almost in front of our camp, and there report for duty to General ———, the corps officer of the day.

Without a moment's delay we sprang over the works and were soon at the point designated, but the corps officer of the day had gone to some other portion his line and I halted my command near this house, where we lay down on the ground to await his return. On a little knoll just in front of us lay the 5th New Hampshire, almost unengaged, but a short distance to our right a brisk fight was in progress which lasted half an hour or more; and occasionally a stray bullet from that direction went whistling over our heads. Presently an aide rode up and led the 5th New Hampshire off to our right at a double-quick, leaving a considerable number of unoccupied pits on the picket line in front, for their videttes were withdrawn and hastened off after the main body. We were lying at the foot of the slope, in a very unfavorable position to receive an attack, and as the officer of the day had not yet appeared I concluded to move up and occupy temporarily at least the commanding position from which the New Hampshire regiment had been withdrawn, and to advance a line of videttes to the unoccupied picket pits.

There was considerable firing at irregular intervals on either side of us, and not knowing how soon we might be assailed or how long we might remain, I concluded to strengthen our now most favorable position by throwing up a light line of breastworks. We did not have a shovel with us, but when I gave the order there stood near at hand two or three frame outbuildings, which twenty

minutes later, were among the things that had been, and the material which had composed them was piled up along our front as a basis for a barricade which was ere long covered with dirt shoveled on with pieces of boards and tin plates.

As soon as these works were bullet-proof, I ordered my men to lie down behind them, and walked out to the picket pits in front to view the country beyond. The position we occupied was on the crest of a slight barren hill which from the picket pits ran gently down to an apparently swampy flat covered with a dense growth of bushes from six to eight feet high. Beyond this thicket and about half a mile away, ran another cleared ridge parallel with the one we were occupying, the crest of which was covered with a most formidable line of works.

These works, for aught I could tell, may have been heavily manned or wholly unoccupied; but just as the sun went down and its last bright rays rested upon them there came from one particular spot continuous flashes of light; and by the aid of my glass I was soon convinced that a column of troops with bayonets fixed, were moving through an opening in the line, and marching out over an old road on which I was standing and across which my regiment was lying. That we would soon have a serious job on hand was exceedingly probable. Bidding my videttes if attacked in force to reserve their fire until the enemy was within fifty yards of them, and then empty their pieces as deliberately as possible and hasten back, I made my way to the main body and after notifying my officers what they might expect, took position a few feet in front of the extreme right of our line to watch further developments. At first I could see nothing of the enemy's advancing forces, but presently as I had expected, they emerged from the thicket, on the road at the foot of the slope just in front of us. They were yet moving in column but the next moment their advance, about five hundred strong, rushed forward into battle line with as much precision as if they had been on drill; and, without deigning to notice the straggling volley which at this juncture my videttes poured into them, lowered their bayonets and started up the slope on a charge. It was a grand

sight, but somehow I pitied them, feeling sure they had witnessed the departure of the 5th New Hamshire, but knew nothing of our having in the interval moved up and intrenched ourselves there.

Our closely followed videttes no sooner reached the main line, than I shouted the order "commence firing," at which my men nothing loth sprang up from behind their works, and opened the most telling and terrific fire I have ever witnessed, instantly breaking and completely demoralizing the charging line, the troops of which either threw themselves flat on the ground or rushed pell mell for shelter into the picket pits until they were literally piled on top of each other. A grand opportunity had now arrived and we did not let it pass unimproved, but before the order "charge" had fairly escaped my lips, right forward rushed my gallant regiment. The brave Confederate commander Colonel D. S. Troy of the 49th Alabama grasped from its bearer the battle flag of his regiment, and waved it frantically, in vain efforts to reform his lines; but ere twenty of his followers responded to his appeals we were close upon them, and a bullet from the rifle of Private George W. Tompkins passed through his breast. As he fell Tompkins grasped from him the standard of the 49th which was trailed beneath our own as sweeping on we gathered in as prisoners six of his officers and one hundred and sixty-four of his men, and then hurled volley after volley into the remainder as they fled in wild disorder toward whence they came.

Not one of my command was killed, wounded or even scratched—a circumstance which I believe to be without a parallel in the annals of war. An account of this affair written by Captain Taft of Company C. on the morning of the 26th, while everything was yet fresh in his mind, contains some additional details, and differs in some minor particulars from the account given above. Lest some of my readers should feel that I have overdrawn the picture, I will quote the Captain's account. It reads,

"We remained in the works until about ten o'clock when we

were ordered to the front. We advanced and formed a line of battle in rear of the 5th New Hampshire, and remained there until about half past four o'clock when the 5th N. H. moved to the right and we advanced to the front. As soon as our line was established we all went to work with a will and soon had a temporary line of works on the ground that a few hours before had been occupied by the rebel pickets. There were two small buildings and a barn in the rear of the line. These were soon torn down and the material piled up in front of the regiment. Then with tin plates and pieces of boards and anything that could be used as a substitute, for we had no shovels, we soon had protection enough to call it a breastwork. We had hardly got it completed when the Johnnies came down on us driving in our skirmishers, and advancing in two lines on a double-quick. bayonets fixed, and with a yell that would have made your hair stand on end. As soon as our pickets got in so that our front was clear we opened on them with such a terrific fire that it was impossible for them to face it. Some sought shelter from our murderous fire in the picket pits, others by lying flat on the ground behind stumps; some with a faint hope of saving their lives, crawled behind little bushes not larger than house plants, as a drowning man would clutch at a straw. In two little picket pits in front of our regiment, dug for four men and a corporal, there were from fifty to sixty Johnnies, crawled in on top of each other, so that very few of them could use their guns. While they were in this condition we charged on them taking nearly the whole of them prisoners. The most of those who made an attempt to escape were shot; some of them attempted to rally while others shook their hats and handkerchiefs and shouted us for God's sake to stop firing before we killed all of them. The regiments that advanced in front of us were the 45th, 47th and 49th Alabama. Of these our regiment captured about two hundred officers and men, a colonel and a battle-flag. The colonel was shot through the breast. We carried back a great many wounded, and buried two officers and four men last night; and this morning fourteen more were buried."

After it was all over and my men had given vent to their feelings in three rousing cheers, I dispatched a guard to the rear with the prisoners and a messenger for Surgeon Montfort; after which we with the utmost care and tenderness gathered up the wounded and conveyed them to the only building left standing in our immediate rear, and gave them water, and staunched the best we could the flow of blood from their wounds, my men in several instances holding their thumbs pressed against the severed arteries of their late foes until Surgeon Montfort with his assistants arrived and relieved them.

Colonel Troy had been shot through the lungs and was suffering intense bodily pain, but it was scarcely equal to his agony of mind over the disaster that had befallen his command. He spoke with difficulty, but when I approached him as he lay upon the floor in the house, to arrange a blanket which one of my men had folded as a pillow for him, but which was slipping from under his head, he, after thanking me for the unexpected kindness which had been showered upon him, complained bitterly of what he termed the cowardly conduct of his command. He said, it was not composed exclusively of his own regiment, which he was sure would have behaved better, but of parts of several regiments. I am almost certain that he told me his regiment was the 59th Alabama, but those who questioned the prisoners sent to the rear say it was the 49th, and I have consequently so written it.

Just after the engagement ended, Major General Mott heard that we had a Confederate battle-flag and sent an aid after it. During the evening we picked up over two hundred stand of arms which had been dropped by our prisoners, the killed, and those who had made good their escape. About midnight a heavy picket force came out and relieved us, and we received orders to return to camp. Early the next morning General de Trobriand rode into our camp and after congratulating us on what he termed the wonderfully favorable result of our encounter on the picket line, took me to do in rather severe terms for not sending the captured battle flag to his headquarters before General Mott had time to send for it.

To say that I was exceedingly proud of the success which had attended the efforts of my gallant regiment, but feebly expresses my feelings, but judge if you can of our chagrin when a few days later we read an account of the affair in the New York papers giving all the glory to the 124th Pennsylvania, a regiment we had never heard of. Subsequently however I received a medal of honor from the Secretary of War for private Tompkins, and was personally tendered the thanks of congress in the shape of a brevet commission signed by both the President and Secretary of War.

General Lee's attempt to break through the Union lines at Fort Steadman, on the 25th, may have caused General Grant to alter somewhat his plans of procedure; but no change was made as regards the time fixed upon for our commencement of offensive operations against Petersburg. And just before daybreak on the morning of the 29th, Sheridan's cavalry, and the Second and Fifth Corps, broke camp and marched once more toward the Union left. The established line of works covering the city from the Appomattox river on the northeast to the point where Hatcher's Run is crossed by the Vaughan road on the south-west, were left in charge of the Sixth Corps and three divisions from the army of the James under General Ord, which had crossed over from the north side of the James river for that purpose on the 27th.

The Second Corps pivoting on the extreme left of Grant's intrenched position, swung around in an extended line, over a densely wooded region, without encountering any considerable opposition, and at night rested in the woods in front, but yet a full mile distant from the refused right of the enemy's intrenched line. The Fifth Corps which moved on the left of the Second, met with more serious opposition but after considerable fighting, and a loss of nearly four hundred in killed and wounded, bivouacked in front of the Confederate breastworks covering the White Oak road; while Sheridan's cavalry moving still farther to the left, reached and spent the night at Dinwiddie C. H.; the net results of the day's doings, being the capture of about two hun-

dred prisoners and the planting of a formidable body of troops, in a threatening attitude, in front of the enemy's extended right. Nothing of special interest transpired during the day in the ranks of the 124th, and we spent the night in reserve near the centre of our corps line.

This movement of course jeopardized Lee's communication by the Southside railroad, and his dispositions to meet it are thus described by Pollard. "To secure the defence of his right against this powerful column which Grant had thrust out by his left, was the immediate necessity that stared Gen. Lee in the face, for it was vitally important to secure the lines whereon his troops depended for their daily food; but it was at the same time indispensable that he should maintain the long intrenched line that covered Petersburg and Richmond. There was no resource but the desperate one of stripping his entrenchments to secure his menaced right and contest the prize of the Southside railroad. On the night of the 29th, General Lee, having perceived Grant's manœuvre, dispatched Pickett's and Bushrod Johnson's divisions, Wise's and Ransom's brigade, Huger's battalion of infantry, and Fitzhugh Lee's division, in all about seventeen thousand men, to encounter the turning column of the enemy. The right of the Confederate intrenched line crossed Hatcher's Run at the Boydton plank road, and extended some distance along the White Oak road. Four miles beyond the termination of this line there was a point where several roads from the north and south emerged on the White Oak road, forming what is known as the Five Forks. It was an isolated position, but one of great value, as it held the strategic key that opened up the whole region which Lee was now seeking to cover."

That night a heavy rain storm set in which lasted eighteen hours and left the streams so swollen, and the roads so bad, that nothing of importance was undertaken by our infantry on the 30th. Sheridan however, advanced a portion of his force under General Devins and Davies against Five Forks; but they found that place so strongly held that they returned without making any serious attempt to take it.

On the morning of the 31st active operations were resumed, and Sheridan advanced with his entire force and carried Five Forks, but in the afternoon was routed and driven back full four miles. Warren's corps (the Fifth) was meantime attacked in flank and so badly handled, that Humphrey was ordered to send Miles' division from our corps to his assistance. After the arrival of Miles at the scene of Warren's disaster a counter assault was made and the Confederates driven back behind their intrenchments, on the White Oak road, with heavy loss mainly in prisoners.

While all this was taking place on our left, Humphrey, with portions of his two remaining divisions, made several unsuccessful attempts to carry the enemy's works along his front. Our brigade being in reserve was marched from point to point in readiness to support any portion of the line where its assistance might be required. About two o'clock, P. M., I received orders detaching the 124th and ordering me to hasten with it to the front and occupy a strip of breastworks which since the departure of the troops sent to help Warren had been occupied by a light line of skirmishers; but in front of which a Confederate battery, supported by a line of infantry, had just appeared.

These works which had been erected the day before by Miles' men, were about a third of a mile distant from where our brigade was then standing; and springing to my saddle I led the regiment off in column, on a run, toward the point designated. When within three hundred feet of the works, and just as we were emerging from a piece of woods, General Grant and a portion of his staff went galloping slowly past, drawing the fire of the Confederate battery; and almost the first shell, which passed very near the General's head without causing him to dodge or quicken his speed in the least, exploded directly in front of our column, severely wounding Adjutant King, who was riding by my side. I had just shouted the order "Forward into line," and as company A. came up another shell exploded right along side of me; literally disemboweling and tearing to pieces Private James L. Johnson of that company. We soon reached the works without further loss, and were not long quieting the enemy's guns, and

putting to flight their unprotected line, with no inconsiderable loss, while our only casualty at the works was the wounding of Private Charles Pullman, one of our sharpshooters in company H. About nine o'clock that evening we were withdrawn and moved with the brigade to a new position about a mile to the left. There we threw up a new line of works behind which we spent the night.

Lieutenant King was a brave officer and made a most efficient Adjutant. When he was wounded I heard a heavy thud and at first supposed his horse only had been struck, but the moment my eyes rested on the Lieutenant's face, I knew that he was seriously injured. A piece of the exploding shell had struck his leg, tearing the flesh from his ankle, so that the joint lay open. The surgeons told him that the amputation of his foot was an absolute necessity but he thought differently, and with characteristic firmness refused to allow them to perform the operation. He was right, for though lamed for life he is now able to walk about on his "condemned" foot without the use of a cane, though that article comes very handy at times, and he usually carries it.

When we awoke on the morning of April 1st, we found that Warren's entire corps had been withdrawn from Humphrey's left, and moved off to the assistance of Sheridan, whose command had since its repulse from Five Forks on the afternoon of the 31st, become entirely isolated from the rest of the army. During the day Sheridan again drove the enemy back to the shelter of his earthworks and with the assistance of Warren's infantry fought a most desperate and decisive battle with heavy loss to both sides in killed and wounded, but which resulted in Sheridan's final capture of the place together with over five thousand Confederate prisoners, and a complete repulse of the enemy's right; for the remaining troops, in the words of Pollard, "fled westward from Five Forks routed, demoralized, and past control; and General Lee found that his right, rested from his centre, was turned almost without a battle."

The Second Corps remained comparatively inactive throughout the day, our brigade having been withdrawn from the front

at daylight and massed in the woods to the rear, where it rested until dark when it again advanced and reoccupied the works from which it had in the morning been withdrawn.

That evening the Union commander ordered the guns in position in front of Petersburg to open fire on the doomed city; for a short and graphic account of which event let us again refer to Pollard. "Grant celebrated the victory of Five Forks, and performed the prelude of what was yet to come by a fierce and continuous bombardment along his lines in front of Petersburg. Every piece of artillery in the thickly studded forts, batteries and mortar beds joined in the prodigious clamor; reports savagely, terrifically crashing through the narrow streets and lanes of Petersburg, echoed upwards; it appeared as if fiends of the air were engaged in the sulphurous conflict."

At a quarter of twelve that night I was ordered by Major-General Mott, through General de Trobriand, to advance with the 124th up to within two hundred and fifty feet of the enemy's works in our immediate front, and open a vigorous fire and maintain my position there for half an hour, if possible, but not to assault their lines. Just what the object of this strange and apparently suicidal movement was I did not stop to inquire, nor was I asked the question by a single member of my gallant regiment, which our commanders knew full well would be found ready, in response to orders, to undertake any duty, no matter how hazardous it might seem. Five minutes after the order was received we had passed our earthworks and were moving cautiously but steadily forward through the black darkness, for the heavens above us were shrouded with dense clouds. For about two hundred yards all went well. Then just as we entered a piece of woods and the darkness if possible began to grow more dense, unseen briars tore our clothes and flesh, tangled vines tripped us up, the earth beneath our feet grew spongy, and at every step we sank deeper and yet deeper into the mud and water. And our further advance in that direction was rendered impossible by a swale or swamp which, though of no great width was under existing circumstances absolutely impass-

able. At this juncture bullets from the enemy's pickets began to whistle among us. But this fire we returned with such promptness and effect that their thin line fled for protection to their main works, which were near at hand. Then their artillery, posted on a high ridge some two hundred yards away, opened a terrific fire, and presently a battle line added a continuous shower of hissing leaden bullets to the thundering storm of iron shot and shell.

We kept up a rapid fire in return and the roar and racket soon became so terrific that General de Trobriand, fearing the enemy would sally forth and overpower my command, hurried out the 73d N. Y. and 110th Penn. to our assistance. The engagement continued some fifteen minutes after the arrival of our support, when an aide rode out and recalled us. The most serious obstacle encountered was the swamp, for their shells and nearly all of their bullets passed harmlessly over our heads.

However, some of the latter were aimed only too well, for on returning we carried back with a number of seriously wounded, the dead body of as brave a soldier as ever fell in battle upon Virginia's bloody soil, Captain Edward J. Carmick, of Company F. At early dawn we buried him by the roadside and, with eyes moistened with tears and hearts filled with sorrow, carefully marked his grave. Eleven months afterward, I received from his mother this letter.

"RONKONKOMA, LAKESIDE LAKELAND, LONG ISLAND, MARCH 2, 1866."

COLONEL WEYGANT,

"*Dear Sir*:—As you were the Colonel of the 124th N. Y. State Vols. at the time of the death of my beloved son Captain Edward J. Carmick, an officer under your command, who was killed in front of Petersburg on the night of April 1st 1865, I take the liberty of addressing you. . . . . He was a most kind, dutiful and affectionate son, and his death will be to me a life-long sorrow; for it has deprived me of my greatest happiness in life, as he was dearer to me than life itself; and had you, sir, known all of his noble qualities you would not, as you may now, think a mother's love causes her to eulogize her lost son more than he deserved. There was great sympathy and perfect confidence between us, and he never deceived me in his life. While in the army, which was nearly four years, he kept

up a frequent correspondence with me, and you sir do not seem a stranger to me, as he often spoke so kindly of you. He thought you a brave officer and appreciated everything you may have done for his benefit. On the 27th of November last, I visited his grave at the junction of the Boydton and Quaker roads, eight miles out from Petersburg, Va. I found his grave as it had been described to me. General Gibbon, who was in command there, kindly furnished me two teams and men sufficient to disinter him, and I had his remains put in a metallic coffin that I had carried out from New York for the purpose. On opening the grave I found his body in an excellent state of preservation and could easily recognize him. A head board with his name cut on it with a knife was firmly nailed to a tree under which he reposed. Oh, what a satisfaction it was to me to find my darling boy had been buried by kind friends, and as you probably gave orders for his burial so carefully, a mother's heart is filled with gratitude to you for it, and for all and every kindness you may have shown him in life, and for kindly caring for his remains in having them deposited where I could recover them. I could not rest satisfied until I visited his grave myself. I brought home his remains and had them buried with funeral services on the 10th of Dec. last near his home. I regret, sir, that I was unable to see you when I visited your regiment at Hart's Island when it was there waiting to be discharged—you being absent at the time. Yourself and the officers of your regiment will always seem near to me as the brothers in arms of my beloved son. Had he lived I believe he would always have felt a warm friendship for you and them.

"I am very respectfully,

"EVELINA L. CARMICK."

A few hours after our return to the main line from the apparently useless and fruitless midnight advance in which Captain Carmick was killed, I learned that the object aimed at was not only most important but that it had been fully accomplished. Grant, it appears, had directed Generals Ord, Wright and Parke, who commanded the troops now occupying our intrenched lines to the south and east of Petersburg, to assault and if possible carry the formidable works in their front at break of day. Gen. Lee, supposing Grant's chosen point of attack was the now most vulnerable Confederate right flank, stripped his works near Petersburg of the bulk of their garrison, which early in the evening he hurried off to a chosen position in front of the Second Corps. But shortly after these troops had taken position in front of us, Lee

became aware of his mistake, and ordered them back to the works from which they had been withdrawn.

The midnight advance of the 124th and several similar demonstrations by regiments of other divisions, on our left, were made to delay the return of these troops, and with such success that they did not get fairly under way until three A. M., so that when the critical moment arrived they were neither in their strong works at Petersburg where their services were so sorely needed, nor confronting the Union turning column on their right, but caught on the march half way between the two points, and fully three miles distant from either. Our brave Captain Carmick's life was therefore not lost in vain, for the affair in which he fell contributed in no small degree to the mighty Union success which followed, bringing about a result which undoubtedly saved the lives of hundreds if not thousands of brave Union soldiers.

The grand assault was opened promptly at the appointed time. Parke, on the Union right, carried the enemy's outer lines, capturing several guns and a few prisoners, but found their inner lines so strong that he despaired of being able to carry them and desisted; Wright with his own corps (the 6th) supported by two divisions of Ord's made an impetuous and determined advance, losing heavily but carrying everything in his front, and capturing a large number of guns and several thousand prisoners. Ord's remaining division forced the enemy's line at Hatcher's Run and with the main body under Wright swung around and pressed forward from the west toward Petersburg. At length, about nine A. M. Humphrey advanced with the divisions of Mott, and Hays, carried a redoubt, scaled the enemy's works in his front, and closing in on the left of Ord's men pushed on with the victorious lines toward the fated city.

In this glorious advance a portion of de Trobriand's brigade led by the 124th moved at a double-quick over one of the main roads leading into Petersburg. Ahead of us was a demoralized fleeing body of Confederates, whose pace we occasionally quickened by hurling into them a few bullets. Several times a squad of the hindermost, wheeled and returned our fire, but in

so wild a manner that none of us were injured by it. With wild huzzas, we pushed rapidly on and did not halt until the enemy had been driven behind his inner line of works immediately surrounding the city. Sheridan who held position on the extreme Union left, and had with him in addition to his cavalry, the bulk of the Fifth Corps and Miles' division from our corps, was equally successful; and when in the afternoon Miles rejoined us he brought with him several captured guns and six hundred prisoners.

The enemy yet held the city, and Lee was permitted to spend the remainder of the day, making new dispositions of the troops of his shattered army, for "Butcher Grant" could not be made to see the necessity of wasting ten thousand lives in assaulting the formidable works on the outskirts of the city, which he declared could at the end of a few hours be carried by a corporal's guard. Early in the afternoon Mott's division was assigned a position in the most advanced Union line, while the remaining troops of our corps moved to the left, to complete our investing half circle; both flanks of which that evening rested on the Appomattox River.

About four P. M. a strong skirmishing force was advanced on our right to feel the enemy's lines, and soon became hotly engaged, but pushed resolutely forward until General Grant, who had established temporary headquarters in a frame house just behind where our brigade was lying, sent a messenger with orders for them to desist.

Lee's judicious redisposition of his troops which was carried on in plain view of the Union outlooks during the afternoon, was not for the purpose of attempting to hold fast to Petersburg, for that he knew was now an impossibility, but merely to gain a few hours for another purpose. At eleven A. M. he had sent a dispatch to the Confederate War Department at Richmond advising that preparations be immediately made for the evacuation of that city. And that night while the elated troops of the investing army lay sleeping by the side of their loaded weapons around Petersburg, there was being enacted in the Confederate Capital, only thirteen miles distant, one of the wildest scenes ever witnessed on this continent. Pollard, the author of *The Lost Cause*,

was in the city at the time, and as the fall of Richmond was the direct result of the successes at Petersburg, in which the 124th bore an honorable part, I will insert here a few passages from his weird story of the reign of terror which preceded its evacuation.

"A small slip of paper, sent up from the War Department to President Davis, as he was seated in his pew in St. Paul's church, contained the news of the most momentous event of the war. It is a most remarkable circumstance that the people of Richmond had remained in profound ignorance of the fighting which had been taking place for three days on Gen. Lee's lines. There was not a rumor of it in the air. Not a newspaper office in the city had any inkling of what was going on. Indeed for the past few days there had been visible reassurance in the Confederate Capital; there were rumors that Johnston was moving to Lee's lines and a general idea that the combined force would take the offensive against the enemy. But a day before Grant had commenced his heavy movement a curious excitement had taken place in Richmond. The morning train had brought from Petersburg the wonderful rumor that Gen. Lee had made a night attack, in which he had crushed the enemy along his whole line. . . . How was it possible to imagine that in the next twenty-four hours, war, with its train of horrors, was to enter the scene; that this peaceful city, a secure possession for four years, was at last to succumb; that it was to be a prey to a great conflagration, and that all the hopes of the Southern Confederacy were to be consumed in one day, as a scroll in the fire?

"As the day wore on, clatter and bustle in the streets denoted the progress of the evacuation, and convinced those who had been incredulous of its reality. The disorder increased each hour. The streets were thronged with fugitives making their way to the railroad depot; pale women and little shoeless children struggled in the crowd; oaths and blasphemous shouts smote the ear. Wagons were being hastily loaded at the departments with boxes, trunks, etc., and driven to the Danville depot. In the afternoon a special train carried from Richmond President Davis and some

of his cabinet. At the departments all was confusion; there was no system; there was no answer to inquiries; important officers were invisible, and every one felt like taking care of himself. Outside the mass of hurrying fugitives, there were collected here and there mean-visaged crowds, generally around the commissary depots; they had already scented prey; they were of that brutal and riotous element that revenges itself on all communities in a time of great public misfortune.

"When it was finally announced by the Mayor that those who had hoped for a dispatch from Gen. Lee contrary to what he had telegraphed in the morning, had ceased to indulge such an expectation, and that the evacuation of Richmond was a foregone conclusion, it was proposed to maintain order in the city by two regiments of militia; to destroy every drop of liquor in the warehouses and stores; and to establish a patrol through the night. But the militia ran through the fingers of their officers; the patrols could not be found after a certain hour; and in a short while the whole city was plunged into mad confusion and indescribable horrors.

"It was an extraordinary night; disorder, pillage, shouts, mad revelry of confusion. In the now dimly lighted city could be seen black masses of people, crowded around some object of excitement, besieging the commissary stores, destroying liquor, intent perhaps upon pillage, and swaying to and fro in whatever momentary passion possessed them. The gutters ran with a liquor freshet, and the fumes filled the air. Some of the straggling soldiers passing through the city, easily managed to get hold of quantities of the liquor. Confusion became worse confounded: the sidewalks were encumbered with broken glass; stores were entered at pleasure and stripped from top to bottom; yells of drunken men, shouts of roving pillagers, wild cries of distress filled the air, and made night hideous.

"But a new horror was to appear upon the scene and take possession of the community. To the rear-guard of the Confederate force on the north side of the James River, under General Ewell, had been left the duty of blowing up the iron clad vessels

in the James and destroying the bridges across that river. The Richmond, Virginia, and an iron-ram, were blown to the winds; the little shipping at the wharfs was fired; and the three bridges that spanned the river were wrapped in flames, as soon as the last troops had traversed them. The work of destruction might well have ended here. But Gen. Ewell, obeying the letter of his instructions, had issued orders to fire the four principal tobacco warehouses of the city.

"The warehouses were fired, the flames seized on the neighboring buildings and soon involved a wide and widening area; the conflagration passed rapidly beyond control; and in this mad fire, this wild unnecessary destruction of their property the citizens of Richmond had a fitting *souvenir* of the imprudence and recklessness of the departing Administration.

"Morning broke on a scene never to be forgotten. . . . The great warehouse on the basin was wrapped in flames; the fire was reaching whole blocks of buildings; . . . Its roar sounded in the ears, it leaped from street to street; pillagers were busy at their vocation, and in the hot breath of the fire were figures as of demons contending for prey.

"The sun was an hour or more above the horizon, when suddenly there ran up the whole length of main street the cry of 'Yankees, Yankees!' The upper part of this street was choked with crowds of pillagers—men provided with drays, others rolling barrels up the streets, or bending under heavy burdens, and intermixed with them women and children with smaller lots of plunder in bags, baskets, tubs, buckets, and tin-pans. As the cry of 'Yankees' was raised, this motley crowd tore up the street, cursing, screaming, trampling upon each other, alarmed by an enemy not yet in sight, and madly seeking to extricate themselves from imaginary dangers. Presently, beyond this crowd following up the tangled mass of plunderers, but not pressing or interfering with them, was seen a small body of Federal cavalry riding steadily along. Forty Massachusetts troopers dispatched by Gen. Weitzel to investigate the condition of affairs, had ridden without let or hindrance into Richmond."

Meantime everything in and about Petersburg remained unusually orderly and quiet. During the night Gen. Lee and his army stole away over the muffled bridges so silently that it was said they had taken off their shoes that we might not be disturbed by the echo of their departing footsteps. On the morning of the 3d Gen. Grant sent a governor and provost-guard into the city, and forthwith set his army in motion after Lee's fleeing veterans.

CASUALTIES NEAR HATCHER'S RUN, MARCH 31, 1865.

LIEUTENANT AND ACTING ADJUTANT JOHN S. KING		Wounded.
Private James L. Johnson	Co. A	Killed.
" Charles Pullman	" H	Wounded.

CASUALTIES NEAR BOYDTON ROAD APRIL 1–2, 1865.

CAPTAIN EDWARD J. CARMICK,	Co. F	Killed.
SERGEANT Albert I. Bunce	" C	Wounded.
CORPORAL Samuel Yoemans	" A	"
Private William A Retalic	" A	"
" John J. Messenger	" B	"
" Luke Petitt	" C	"
" Andrew W. Conklin	Co. K	"

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PURSUIT.—OUR LAST ENGAGEMENT.—LEE SURRENDERS.

THE Confederate forces, after their hasty flight from the Petersburg and Richmond lines under cover of the friendly darkness, on the night of April 2d, concentrated at Chesterfield C. H., a small village situated several miles to the west and about eight miles distant from each of the above named cities. From that point the Veteran army of Northern Virginia, yet forty thousand strong, moved rapidly westward along the northern shore of the Rappahannock river some thirty miles to Amelia C. H.

Simultaneously with telegraphing to the Confederate War Department on Sunday morning the necessity of immediate preparation for the evacuation of their capital, General Lee had sent a dispatch to Danville ordering a supply of commissary and Quartermaster's stores forwarded to Amelia C. H. This dispatch was duly received, and early that afternoon three long trains heavily laden with the stores called for arrived in safety at the Amelia C. H. station; but the officer in charge of them, there found awaiting his arrival a dispatch from one of the blundering Confederate War Department officials, directing him to hasten forward to Richmond with the trains in his charge. What the Richmond officials really meant to call for were the empty cars; but this well trained officer obeyed the second order without asking for the why or wherefore just as promptly as he had the first one; and among the property consumed by the conflagration which that night swept over the business portion of Richmond, were these trains laden with the food with which Lee expected to replenish the haversacks of his weary and hungry army on its arrival at Amelia C. H. And it is said that when the Confeder-

ate chief, on reaching that point, learned of the calamity, his heart sank within him.

The pursuit was begun on the morning of the 3d. Before the sun was up Sheridan, with his cavalry and the Fifth Corps, was moving up the south bank of the Rappahannock toward Jettersville, a depot on the Danville railroad about seven miles south-east of Amelia C. H. Meade, with the Second and Sixth Corps, followed close after Sheridan, starting at eight A. M. and pushing rapidly forward with scarce a ten minute halt until ten P. M.

During the day our brigade, which had the advance of the Second Corps column and marched full twenty miles, gathered in about two hundred dismounted Confederate cavalrymen and captured one brass field-piece.

On the morning of the 4th we were awakened from our slumbers at three A. M., and an hour later resumed our onward march. Many of the Orange Blossoms had eaten their last hard tack before lying down to rest the night before, and consequently started that morning breakfastless; but all were in the best of spirits, and not one of the number suggested such a thing as waiting for rations to come up, or asked to be sent to the ambulances or allowed to lag behind because of sickness or blistered feet.

About ten A. M. a general halt of Humphrey's Corps was ordered, and presently General de Trobriand directed me to advance with my regiment into the country to the right of our line of march for a mile or two and see if I could not forage a meal for the brigade. The 124th had never before been sent out on a regular foraging expedition, and as many of the boys were very hungry, this order was received with a hearty cheer.

Hastily forming column and moving from the main road through a piece of woods and over the cleared fields about a mile, we came to a deep and thickly wooded ravine, through which ran a stream of water. Following the course of the ravine a short distance we reached and turned into a road that led down to an old fashioned mill. Near this mill there stood a dilapidated frame house in which dwelt the miller, who, hearing our approach

came out to see who we were and what we wanted. His *honest* face wore a surprised look when he saw our clothes were blue instead of grey; and on learning our errand he stoutly declared that a body of Confederate cavalry had been there the day before and carried off every bushel of grain from the mill and nearly every particle of food from his house, besides driving off all his live stock.

My hungry boys refused to credit the old man's story, and clamored so hard for the privilege of testing its truth by examining the mill for themselves, that I allowed about twenty of them to enter it. The first floor contained nothing worth their notice, but on the upper floor they found a small blind bin, filled with corn, whereupon the frightened miller was pressed into service and ordered to start the mill and grind it for us. He instantly set about the forced task, but his movements were so slow that several of the men I had detailed to superintend the job volunteered to assist him.

In a trice the raceway gate was hoisted to its utmost limit, and as the water rushed through and fell on the old rickety water-wheel it started with a creak and a groan, but was soon rushing around with such speed that the old mill trembled and shook as if it had the ague. The noise of the grinding grew louder and yet louder; the boys shouted at each other as with boxes, pails and measures they hastened from the bin above to the hopper below; and the old man grew frantic, and stormed about, unheeded by all, while his wife thrust her head from an upper window of the house and stared at the shaking mill with an expression of countenance indicating most plainly that she was sure the old man instead of his corn was in the hopper.

Presently several young slave women crawled out from their hiding place in the upper part of a log cabin, wearing on their black features a frightened grin as if they were uncertain whether the day of doom or of jubilee had arrived; then three half grown pigs, aroused by the noise of the mill, broke from a pen under or near the house, and started up the side of the ravine toward the plain above, but the foremost one was soon brought down by a

shot fired from a rifle in the hands of Lieutenant Lawson, and the remaining two, foolishly halting to take a farewell smell of their defunct brother, soon shared his ignoble fate—death at the hands of a hungry Yankee.

In the brush near where the pigs fell, several loaded muskets were found, and one of the slaves secretly informed some of my men of the whereabouts of several sides of bacon. Meantime the grinding continued, but just as the last measure of corn was cast into the hopper the stones became clogged, a crash was heard, and a man rushed out and shut down the gate; the upper grinding stone had been thrown from the spindle and gone crashing through the side of the mill.

Leaving Captain Quick with Company G. in charge of the corn, bacon and fresh pork already collected at the mill, I divided the balance of the regiment into three parts and sent each off in a different direction, with orders not to enter any dwelling, but to *borrow* all the cattle, pigs, sheep and poultry they could find within a mile of the mill, and to return there at the end of an hour. I moved with one of these columns, which did not return empty handed, but that under Captain Travis was the most successful. It was the last to return, and came in drawing a platform wagon which the captain had personally fitted up by placing a door on an old set of running gears. This wagon was loaded with carcases of sheep, pigs, and calves, and was drawn in true fireman fashion by a long rope. Behind it was a motley procession, headed by a long horned sheep of the male gender, tied to the wagon, and several very black contrabands, driving two or three wonderfully lean cows. Nearly every man in the regiment had captured a chicken, goose or duck, and had his haversack filled to its utmost limit with corn meal and bacon. But all this plunder when divided among three thousand men made but a scanty meal. After partaking of a late dinner we advanced about three miles and halted for the night.

At half past three A. M. on the 5th we resumed our onward march, and not a few again started breakfastless; but at about eight A. M. we were overtaken by a supply train, and received

three days' rations of hard bread, sugar and coffee. At dusk that evening we joined Sheridan's command at Jettersville, where it had taken position across the Danville railroad, thereby cutting off all supplies from that quarter for Lee's army, which was yet at Amelia C. H., where it had been obliged to remain since the morning of the 4th, in order to gather in from the country around a small stock of forage for its horses and food for its men. Our corps during the evening took up a strong position on the left of the Fifth and bivouacked.

Sheridan's command had arrived there that morning; and during the day a severe engagement had taken place between a division of Union cavalry under General Davies and a body of Lee's infantry, which had resulted in a loss to the Confederates of a foraging train of one hundred and eighty wagons, together with a battery of artillery and about a hundred prisoners.

That night preparations were made for an advance in force at daylight on the 6th against the Confederate position at Amelia C. H. But Lee, during the night, moved off toward Farmville in the vain hope of being able by destroying bridges behind him to escape into the mountains beyond Lynchburg.

On the morning of the 6th the pursuit was resumed. Each corps of Meade's army advanced in a distinct column, the Second Corps taking the road Lee was on and the Fifth and Sixth moving through the country on either flank.

General de Trobriand's brigade again led the Second Corps and soon came up to Lee's rear-guard at a point where the road we were on crossed a small stream called Sailors Creek. Here the 20th Indiana was deployed in a heavy skirmish line and soon became hotly engaged. The other regiments as they came up hastily deployed into battle line behind the skirmishers. But before our brigade line was completed, Major General Mott rode to the front to see for himself what the opposing line was composed of; and just as our regiment was taking position Captain Bradley came riding back with orders directing General de Trobriand to send forward the 124th without delay. A moment later the Sons of Orange were advancing at a run. As we passed

General Mott, he pointed across a bridge that spanned the stream and shouted, "Deploy as soon as you cross, and take that train." I could see nothing that looked like a Confederate wagon train, and while my men were deploying on the open side hill under the fire of a straggling line of retreating Confederate skirmishers, the General waved his hand as if he wished me to move to the left, through a piece of woods. Springing from my saddle, I ran down the bank a few yards, and stooped down so as to be able to look under the branches of the trees in the direction indicated. Winding over a steep hill about a quarter of a mile distant, I saw the coveted train, and hastened back toward my horse determined that the 124th should have the glory of capturing it.

Before I had time to remount General Mott was at my side; and, with one foot in the stirrup, I turned around to receive such further orders as he might have to give. He raised his arm and pointed through the woods saying "Weygant move by the—" at that juncture a bullet whistled past my ear and buried itself in his thigh, and as a slight "oh" escaped his lips, he extended his hands toward me and I helped him from his saddle. Captain Bradley and several other members of his staff were soon with him, and divining what the balance of his order would have been I started my command by the left flank through the woods, but was soon halted by an order from General de Trobriand and recalled to the main line.

After a delay of about ten minutes—during which General de Trobriand assumed command of the division, and Colonel Shepherd of 1st Me. H. A. our senior regimental commander took his place at the head of our brigade—the advance was resumed with our entire division in battle line and the 20th Indiana yet deployed as skirmishers. Meantime the enemy in our immediate front had fled.

When about two miles beyond the bridge the 124th was ordered to hasten to the front and relieve the 20th Ind. which was out of ammunition. This was speedily accomplished, much to the delight of my men, who hurrying forward soon came in sight of the wagon train which General Mott had seen from the

bridge where he was wounded. We were soon near enough to open so effective a fire on the teams as to speedily compel the abandonment of fifteen or twenty wagons, and two brass guns which were being moved with them. Whenever a horse fell the drivers and guard hastily unhitched and rode off the balance of the team. As wagon after wagon fell into our hands my men became fairly wild with excitement, and it was with great difficulty that I could hold back that portion of the skirmish line moving nearest the road, which was under the immediate charge of Captain Travis, who was the wildest man of them all. Occasionally the enemy's rear-guard would about face and send a volley or two toward us and every now and then one or more of my men would go down, but their comrades would only quicken their pace, yell the louder and load and fire the faster. For miles the boys moved so rapidly that I was obliged to keep my horse on a jog trot to keep with them.

At length, as we emerged from a strip of woods, we saw standing in battle array behind light earthworks, on the brow of a hill just in front of us, a solid battle line of the foe. On their left flank there stood, drawn up as if ready to charge, a squadron of cavalry, about a hundred strong. I immediately ordered a halt and opened a brisk fire. The left and centre of my line took shelter behind the trees in the edge of the woods, and did some splendid shooting, but the right stretched across an open field, and I presently heard from that direction a charging shout and saw Captain Travis with his old company numbering all told about thirty men, start on a foolhardy charge toward the enemy's cavalry, and I was obliged to hasten off in that direction and recall him. Our main line soon came up and in the words of our brigade report "charged with the skirmish line driving the enemy from his works and capturing a large number of prisoners."

Some two hours later the union advance was again disputed by a battle line posted as was the first behind earthworks on a ridge. This time we found ourselves confronted by a large portion of Lee's main body instead of his rear-guard. The works which were manned by a solid battle line, studded at intervals with

artillery and gayly decked with Confederate battle flags, ran from a point almost opposite the right of my skirmish line along our front, and extended into the woods to our left as far as I could see.

In a few moments our main line again came up and prepared to charge with the skirmishers. Meantime heavy firing broke out on our left, and once again the woods and hills of Virginia echoed the mingling thunders of a regular battle.

Our entire division was soon hastening forward with wild shouts, on what proved to be its last general charge against its brave old adversaries; and we soon swept up to and over the enemy's works in our front, capturing several hundred prisoners together with a number of battle-flags and five or six pieces of artillery.

The Sixth Corps and Sheridan's cavalry were fighting on our left. They met with more serious opposition than we had encountered and were twice repulsed with a loss of over two thousand killed and wounded, but in the end carried everything before them, and captured nearly two-thirds of Lieutenant-General Ewell's Corps, including Ewell himself and five of his general officers.

After this engagement, called the battle of Sailors Creek, in which our regiment took twenty-eight prisoners, and lost a considerable number of men, there was a halt of nearly an hour. But once under way again we soon overtook the enemy's rear-guard and pressing on, drove it from hill top to hill top, gathering in prisoners by the hundred and causing the abandonment of wagon after wagon and gun after gun until sundown, when our corps was ordered to halt for the night. This day's losses to Lee's army included nearly six thousand prisoners, four hundred wagons and upwards of thirty pieces of artillery.

"The decisive character of this result," writes Swinton, after describing the doings of the Sixth Corps and Sheridan's cavalry, "was largely due to the energetic movements of the Second Corps, which, moving to the right, had pressed the Confederates closely in a rear-guard fight all day till night when it had attained a

position near the mouth of Sailors Creek. Here the Confederates were so crowded upon, that a large train was captured and many hundred taken prisoners. The trophies of the Second Corps included, in addition several pieces of artillery and thirteen flags."

In this series of engagements fought along Sailor's Creek, Va. April 6, 1865, occurred the following

CASUALTIES OF THE 124TH.

SERGT. John H. Warford	Co. A	Wounded.
SERGT. Whitmore Terwilliger	" I	"
CORP. William Sutherland	" I	"
CORP. Austin W. Lamereaux	" E	"
CORP. Moses Crist	" E	"
Private Philetus Lomas	" E	Killed.
" James A. Benton	" I	"
" John W. Garrison	" B	"
" Solomon Davenport	" K	"
" George L. Howard	" K	Wounded.
" Charles Cable	" K	"
" Abraham J. Cronk	" K	"
" Samuel Lewis	" K	"
" Matthew Manny	" I	"
" James Flannigan	" I	"
" John Murphy	" H	"
" John S. Crawford	" F	"
" Lewis E. Tonton	" E	"
" Amos De Long	" D	"
" Daniel Morgan	" A	"
" John Polhamus	" A	"
" John P. Burkhart	" A	Missing.

At an early hour on the morning of the 7th the pursuit was resumed with Humphrey's Corps again leading. About eight A. M. we reached Highbridge, a small place some six miles east of Farmville, where the winding Appomattox is crossed by both a railroad and a wagon road bridge. These bridges, one of which was an immense structure, were built mainly of wood, and just before our arrival had been fired by the Confederate rear-guard—a rather formidable body of which yet held the further shore with the evident determination to hold back our advance until the bridges were destroyed and then delay as long as possible our crossing in order that their main body might have time to gather

in a small supply of forage for their half-starved horses, and food for the hungry men.

General Barlow's division had the advance of our corps that morning and the moment their commander saw the smoke arising from the fired bridges he formed battle line and charged forward on a run, returning as he went the enemy's galling fire the best he could. Three spans of the railroad bridge were consumed before his line reached it, but the wagon road bridge, though covered with smoke and flame, was yet passable, and while his battle line hotly engaged the enemy on the right and left, his reserve brigade charged over the burning structure leaving its hindermost regiment to extinguish the flames, and speedily routed the defending force, capturing a considerable number of prisoners and eighteen pieces of artillery.

From this point Barlow's division was dispatched to Farmville where they overtook a body of the enemy's cavalry burning bridges and covering a long wagon train that was moving toward Lynchburg. The sudden appearance of this gallant division, moving toward them at a double-quick caused these Confederate cavalrymen to destroy one hundred and thirty wagons and flee toward their main body.

From Highbridge Humphrey with the divisions of Miles and De Trobriand moved rapidly forward over the old stage road leading to Appomattox C. H. About five miles beyond the river our further advance in that direction was very seriously interrupted by the main body of Lee's army which had taken up and fortified a strong defensive position across our line of march.

Both our divisions were hurried forward and prepared for a direct assault, but a careful survey of the enemy's position, caused that mode of procedure to be abandoned. The ground between the opposing lines was comparatively open, and ascended gradually from Humphrey's front, for a distance of a thousand yards to the base of a ridge which arose quite abruptly for fifty feet or more, and was crowned with earthworks thickly studded with cannon and manned by a compact battle line.

When all was in readiness for the assault we rested on our

arms awaiting the arrival of Barlow's division, for the recall of which messengers had been dispatched. Presently something about the enemy's line led Humphrey to suppose Lee had resumed his retreat, and a force composed of several regiments from Miles' division was advanced for the purpose of learning what was really taking place. When within a short distance of the Confederate works this reconnoitering force suddenly encountered a fire so terrific that six hundred of its number were speedily killed or wounded and the balance compelled to hasten back to our main line.

Barlow did not arrive until the day was so far spent that it was deemed best to defer the contemplated assault until morning. It turned out that the holding of the enemy at that point by our threatened assault accomplished a result more desirable than would have been gained by his repulse.

Lee during the night resumed his flight and at daybreak on the 8th Humphrey again took up the pursuit; but somehow we did not march as rapidly as formerly; and at three P. M. moved leisurely from the road and bivouacked.

I will not attempt to trace in detail the movements of the other portions of Grant's army during the 7th and 8th. It is enough that while our corps rested on the old stage road awaiting the arrival of Barlow's division from its reconnoissance to Farmville, Sheridan's cavalry and the Sixth Corps had passed around the Confederate army, reached Appomattox station on the Lynchburg railroad, five miles beyond Appomattox C. H., and extinguished Lee's last hope of escape to the mountains by grasping from his vanguard four trains of cars laden with supplies for the hourly wasting remnant of his famishing army.

The evening and night of the 8th passed quietly away, but on the morning of the 9th the air seemed filled with wild rumors, indicating very plainly that the end for which we had sacrificed and endured so much—for which we had so long been marching, fighting and suffering,—was close at hand.

At eight A. M. on the 9th orders came to resume the advance, and for four hours we pressed steadily but slowly forward, not

after but up against our old adversary, now at bay, just ahead of us surrounded on all sides, with every avenue of escape cut off.

At noon orders were passed down our column to move from the road and rest. Then came the report that Grant and Lee were together arranging terms for the surrender of the latter and his army.

A little later an aide from army headquarters came riding down the road reiterating the good news. As strange as it may seem, no one shouted, but instead many a stalwart fellow turned pale. All believed the report but yet wanted it officially confirmed. Presently a wild shout was heard away off to our right, and as it grew louder and yet louder and came nearer and yet nearer, we all sprang to our feet, and rushed out to the edge of the road, and soon saw riding toward us a literally wild man with his bridle reins about his neck, waving in one hand his hat and in the other an empty bottle. It was the Adjutant-General of our division, Major Finklemeier. Every few rods he offered his empty bottle to some officer of his acquaintance and then raised it to his own lips. During the intervening time he kept shouting "Clear the road. Colonels keep your men in line, keep your men in line—I drinks your health—clear the road," and the like.

As the men fell back General Meade and staff appeared riding leisurely along. Our old commander's face for once wore a smile. Behind him cheers like the mingling din of battle settled into one continuous roar, but in his front men held their breath until they heard from him the assurance that Lee and his followers had lain down their arms.

The scene in our brigade after General Meade passed was absolutely indescribable. Men shouted until they could shout no longer, the air above us was for full half an hour filled with caps, coats, blankets, and knapsacks, and when at length the excitement subsided, the men threw themselves on the ground completely exhausted. During the evening and following day the men stole through the woods in small squads to take a look at

our prisoners, and came back with their pockets filled with worthless Confederate bank bills, which they began buying up for keepsakes at the rate of one cent for a dollar; but the price dropped so rapidly that one man came in with five thousand dollars in Confederate money which he had purchased for a one dollar greenback.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOMEWARD BOUND.—RECEPTION AT NEWBURGH.—MUSTERED OUT.

THREE days after the surrender at Appomattox C. H. paroles were distributed to over twenty-six thousand Confederates, who forthwith started in little squads for their respective homes, and the grand army of Northern Virginia passed out of existence. The Union troops then moved leisurely back toward Richmond. On the march and during our halts many a big-hearted Union soldier divided the contents of his haversack with some wandering Confederate; and in hundreds of instances, on the nights of the 12th and 13th, the same blanket covered two brave soldiers —one dressed in blue, and the other in grey or butternut.

The surrender of Lee's army was regarded by all as the end of the war, and the best of feeling prevailed between the rank and file of the victorious and vanquished armies, until the news of the assassination of President Lincoln reached us, when, while staggering under the terrible blow, these paroled prisoners disappeared as if by magical agency, and were seen no more.

On the 14th our brigade reached Burkesville Junction, and was ordered to encamp there. We pitched our tents in a pine woods, and late in the afternoon a Confederate surgeon rode into our camp, and offered to sell, at a moderate sum, a very fine horse he was riding. Dr. Edward C. Fox, who had just joined the regiment as assistant surgeon,* was in want of a horse, and when I retired at nine P. M., he was standing with this Confederate officer by one of our camp-fires, dickering for the latter's beast

* Shortly after our arrival at Burkesville station the following named recruits joined the regiment: James Lerisie, Chester Clifford Nathan W. Foster, Robert Dooling.

and equipments. I had been on duty the previous night, and as circular orders, requiring the signature of regimental commanders, were brought around at night as frequently as in the daytime, I had requested acting Major Travis to spend the night in my tent, and receive, read, and sign my name to all such papers, that I might enjoy an undisturbed night's rest.

About two A. M. however, I was aroused from my slumbers by Travis, and, on opening my eyes, saw him standing in front of me, with a candle in one hand and a paper in the other. His face was colorless, and in a tone of voice expressive of deep anguish, he was repeating over and over again these words: "My God! can it be, can it be!" Grasping the paper, I read: "President Lincoln and Secretary Seward have been assassinated, and it is reported that General Grant also has been murdered." An orderly stood at the tent opening waiting for the circular telegram, and hastily affixing my name, I returned it to him.

A few moments later I walked out in the open air trying to convince myself that it was all a dream. Everything about the camp was quiet, and the shelter tents of my men had an unusually uniform appearance; but they were all empty, and the men with heavy hearts and speechless tongues, were gathered in groups about the smoldering camp-fires. They all seemed stupefied by the terrible news, and were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the next telegram.

There was no more sleep for the army that night. I inquired for the Confederate officer who had come into our camp to try and sell his horse, and was glad to learn that he and every other wearer of grey or butternut, had fled. We had supposed our bloody work was at an end, that the rebellion had been crushed out, and that in a few days we would be at our homes again; but the future was once more enveloped in a cloud of impenetrable darkness. On the morning of the 15th I rode over to division headquarters, and found General de Trobriand walking up and down under the tall pines in front of his tent, with his hands clasped behind him, as if in deep meditation. He

received me very cordially, but I was in nowise comforted or reassured by his allusions to the Reign of Terror in France, and his wild assertions that he firmly believed the war was to reopen and be henceforth prosecuted with the dagger and revolver rather than the rifle and cannon.

But during the day telegrams were received from Washington telling of the safety of Grant, and asserting that though the President would in all probability live but a few hours, Secretary Seward's injuries were not necessarily mortal. After the death of the great Lincoln, news of the surrender of one after another of the outlying posts and armies of the gasping Confederacy poured in upon us almost daily, and the spirit of anxiety and gloom which had settled down on the entire army gradually disappeared. On the first of May Meade's army took up its line of march for Washington.

The Second and Sixth Corps started on different roads the same day, and after a very foolish race from Burkesville Station to Richmond, a distance of fifty-five miles, moved through that city; and marched leisurely along over the often traveled highways through Fredericksburg, and on toward the National Capital, which they came in sight of about the middle of May. The 124th pitched their tents once more near Minor's Hill, and within two miles of the field they had nearly three years before named Camp Cromwell, after their ever beloved and now lamented first Major.

Then came the memorable two days' review at the national capital, of the united armies of the North and West, in which a hundred and fifty thousand bronzed veteran warriors took part; after which we prepared for our final muster out of the service, and return to our homes and the pursuits of civil life.

On the 5th of June all was in readiness, and our last marching orders reached us. Halting a moment at division headquarters, we gave our old commander, General de Trobriand, three hearty cheers, and pushed on to Washington, where a train was found in waiting for us. After a delay of nearly a week on Hart's Island near New York city, we took the *Mary Powell* for Orange County,

and I will let the reporters of the Newburgh daily papers tell the story of our reception.

In referring to our expected arrival *The Daily Union* says: "This regiment of heroes, for such they have proved themselves to be, are expected home soon. They have made as noble a record as any regiment in the field. They have poured out their blood on dozens of historic fields and have a roll of heroic dead whose memory should be precious to Old Orange forever."

The *Newburgh Daily Journal* of June 14th contains the following:

"The long looked for and impatiently expected One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Regiment has arrived at last. They left Hart's Island at eight o'clock on Tuesday morning June 13th, and arrived at Desbrosses street pier in New York, at about eleven o'clock the same morning. They were transferred during the afternoon to the *Mary Powell*, whose noble-hearted commander, Captain Anderson, had proffered to the 'Orange Blossoms' a free passage to Newburgh. The men were all furnished with arms, two-thirds of them having become possessors of their rifles by the payment to the Government of the nominal sum of six dollars each, and the remainder of the regiment being supplied through the kind forethought of Colonel Weygant, from the armories of the Orange County militia companies. In fact the Colonel has always seemed to care more for the welfare and comfort of his men than for his own, and it is no wonder that the boys almost idolize him.

"When we stepped on board the *Powell* at Cozzens' we found the most of the boys crowded on the forward deck, seeming to enjoy themselves hugely in chatting and laughing, and pointing out to each other the familiar features of the scenery along the river. Yet amid the general hilarity reigning on these bronzed and weather-beaten faces, the look of sadness and the tear of regret were occasionally seen—tokens of sorrow for the loss of brave comrades who had fallen in battle, and distress at the thought of meeting their bereaved relatives.

"Going around among the veterans we found the accomplished surgeon of the regiment, Dr. R. V. K. Montfort, who is every inch a man, and a master in his profession—Captain Travis, the hearty, whole-souled 'Hank'—the indefatigable Colonel, who was everywhere at once and personally superintending everything, his presence acting like oil on the troubled waters—Privates Atwood, Post, Sagar, etc., etc.

"When the *Powell* reached the Cornwall dock the enthusiasm of the boys began to be stirred afresh, the land looked unmistakably like that of

Orange County. They now formed on each side, preparatory to the march on reaching Newburgh. When the cannon on the long dock began to roar the boys involuntarily set up a shout of delight, as if they recognized the tones of an old friend. But the belching, bellowing tube sent out no missiles of death among them this time; nothing but the notes of a glorious welcome. The sight that greeted the eyes of those who were on the *Powell* as she neared our village can hardly ever be forgotten by them. Every place which commanded a view of the river seemed to be crowded with eager spectators. Flags were flying, bells ringing, cannon booming, innumerable handkerchiefs waving, and the whole village seemed bent on making itself seen and heard. The boys looked on all this display with undisguised delight, and gave vent to their feelings in repeated cheers. They were marched to the corner of First and Front streets, through the immense throng which had assembled to do them honor, and between open files of the firemen and Union League, who stood with heads uncovered. The procession was then formed in the following order: First the firemen; then the trustees of the village and distinguished citizens; then the Union League accompanied by Eastman's splendid band, of Poughkeepsie; then came the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth. The procession then moved as follows: up First street to Water; up Water to South; up South to Grand; down Grand to Western avenue; up Western avenue to Liberty; down Liberty to Washington's Headquarters. Every flag was out all along the route, and the sight of the bullet-torn battle-flag of the regiment seemed to be regarded with intense interest. Before the boys got around the route they were well furnished with bouquets from the hands of the fair ladies of Newburgh. Every soldier had a bouquet in the muzzle of his rifle. What a change! The weapons from which for the past three years had been issuing the death-dealing bullet, now decorated with the floral tribute of victory and peace.

"The firemen and Leaguers, on reaching the Headquarters, formed in front of the stand in a hollow square, into which the regiment marched. The crowd on the ground was immense, entirely covering the lawn from the house to the eastern limits. There could not have been less than ten thousand persons on the grounds; many having come in from the country, from the opposite side of the river, etc. After music by Eastman's band Judge Taylor addressed the regiment from the stand, in terms of welcome, as follows:

JUDGE TAYLOR'S REMARKS.

"*Colonel Weygant and valiant soldiers of the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Regiment, New York Volunteers:*

"On behalf of the citizens of the County of Orange, I bid you a warm and cordial welcome to your homes again. You come to us war-worn and

scar-worn from the hundred battles of the Army of the Potomac, and you come to us at a time, too, when peace rests upon our beloved country. With proud hearts we welcome you. But that pride is mingled somewhat with sadness when we remember the thousand comrades whom you have left upon the battle-fields of the sunny South. We have with great interest read the history of your achievements during the past three years, but it has been saddened by the news of the fall of so many of your brave comrades. How our hearts were stricken with sorrow after the bloody battle of Gettysburg when we read of the decease of your gallant Colonel Ellis, in whose heart nothing was so dear as his 'Orange Blossoms.' And beside him a thousand have fallen to honor the ground of their bloody conflicts.

"It is fit and proper that you should come to this sacred spot to lay down your arms ere you return to the pursuits of civil life. On this spot the Continental army of Washington was disbanded three-quarters of a century ago, and it is fitting that the Orange County soldiers should come here to lay down their arms no less honorable than those of the Continental army. Just under the foot of that flagstaff lie the remains of the last of Washington's life-guard. You know how we revered him while living and how we mourned him when we deposited his remains beneath that sod. You are the life-guards of the nation, and we look upon you with something of the same reverence which we feel toward the fathers of our country. And we cherish the memory of those who fought, bled, and died, and of those who survived the carnage of Fredericksburg, of Chancellorsville, of Beverly's Ford, of Gettysburg, of the Wilderness, of Spottsylvania, Boydton Road, of Sailor's Creek and the many battle-fields around Richmond.

"But my friends you have come home to us having completed your work, and completed it nobly. To-day our beloved country, which for four long years has been threatened with destruction, is saved by the valor of your arms, and those glorious institutions which our fathers purchased for us with their blood, have been preserved, though threatened by traitorous hands and rebel foes. In accomplishing your work of preserving to us our dearly bought privileges and institutions, you have demonstrated to the world that there is no people on the face of this broad earth so strong, so noble, and so fortunate in having such a glorious record, as the people of America. [Applause.]

"But, my fellow-citizens, you have accomplished another great object. The old Greek philosophers used to tell us that the greatest knowledge any man could have was to know himself. And we have demonstrated in this rebellion that the greatest power any nation can have is to govern and preserve itself. For three-quarters of a century we have been able to protect ourselves against the world—against all foreign nations and against

the insults of all foreign powers. But our popular form of government was in a measure an experiment, and when traitorous hands and domestic foes threatened our institutions, it was the greatest peril in the history of our country. But you have demonstrated by the valor of your arms that the American people are able to govern themselves ; to preserve their nationality from domestic as well as from foreign foes, and we think with reason that we are the strongest nation upon the globe, because we have demonstrated that we have the greatest power.

"But beyond preserving to us the institutions which our fathers left us, you have presented to us anew our glorious Union, more pure, more elevated, more perfect than before. [Applause.] You will have enabled us, on the ensuing Fourth of July—the anniversary of our national independence—to celebrate the absolute fact that 'all men are born free and equal;' that the stars and stripes wave over nothing but freemen, [applause]—and that the contradiction which has existed for the last three-quarters of a century, that four millions of bondmen were held under the starry flag, no longer exists, but that all, of whatever color, birth, or nationality, when they come upon the soil of the United States, under the shadow of that glorious banner, are freemen, and entitled to its protection under all circumstances. And I say that as you have presented to us our glorious country purified, disenthralled and emancipated, you have demonstrated to the world the living fact, and everlasting truth, never again to be called in question, of the motto inscribed upon that glorious banner, 'Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable.'" [Tremendous applause.]

"Colonel Weygant then responded to the speech of welcome with characteristic and soldier-like brevity."

From *Daily Union*, June 14th :

"Nearly three years ago Orange County was stirred to the heart's core by the departure of the gallant 124th. With full ranks and in the height of martial enthusiasm, the regiment went forth to the contest for home, country, and flag. At their head the gallant Ellis, a very *beau ideal* of a soldier, marched, and with many another that came back, alas, to us no more. They left the hearths and homes of Orange for the field of war—great crowds assembled to see them leave, and many sad, as well as many hopeful hearts beheld them.

The regiment had hardly reached the seat of war before it was in the fight, and from that day until the close of the contest, throughout the most momentous campaigns, in the very heart of battle, wherever danger was to be met or honor won there was borne aloft, with steady hands and unfaltering hearts, the banner of the gallant 124th, the 'Orange Blossoms' as they were proudly named. On the fatal field of Chancellorsville the regiment suffered fearfully. At Gettysburg the noble Ellis fell, and scarcely

a truer or a braver soldier has the Republic lost than he. Newburgh lost many of her sons on those sanguinary fields. But still the banner of the 124th was borne along, and Cummins and Weygant upheld with honor the command of the regiment. So through the advance on Richmond, the bloody siege of Petersburg, and all the impressive movements of the war the regiment went, always winning new laurels and putting new names of unfading glory on its imperishable flag. Of such a record may not Newburgh and the whole district well be proud?

"Last night the regiment returned, and Newburgh sprang with hungry heart to meet its brave defenders. * * * There was but little attempt at organized reception, but the popular ovation was all the more enthusiastic, hearty, and sincere.

"From five o'clock the streets were lined with eager, happy faces. The ladies were almost in the majority; most of them carried some pretty badge of welcome, and among the most fitting were beautiful bouquets. Banners and appropriate devices were hung up, and from six o'clock nearly every place of business was closed.

"At half-past five the bells of all the churches commenced a merry peal. At a quarter before seven a salute was fired from long dock, and the first discharge announced to the eager thousands the approach of the *Mary Powell*. At this time the excitement was intense—every spot was thronged with eager multitudes, and since the departure of our regiments, no such scene has been witnessed in Newburgh.

"At seven o'clock the guns on the dock thundered forth the *Mary Powell's* arrival; and very soon the brave and bronzed veterans, battle-worn and scathed, the sunlight of many a bloody field upon their faces, stood upon the shore. Slowly they filed past; and now the people's enthusiasm burst out over all bounds. Our scanty police and watch force were swallowed up and overwhelmed, and the eager multitudes seemed as if they would throw themselves upon the soldiers. On they marched with steady resistless step; their faces and uniforms telling of the fearful scenes they had passed through! Their battle-flag as it was borne aloft awakened intense emotion, hardly a strip of its frayed and bullet-torn silk was left; yet it was more precious to the men, and to the people, than if it were made of cloth of gold. Those shot-pierced, and smoke-begrimed fragments have bound the shattered Union together in ties of blood; and it is for statesmen to complete the soldier's work, with bands of unrusting gold.

"The firemen had the right of the line, and made a very fine appearance; they were warmly received by the people. But the veterans lit up the hearts of the multitude again, and round after round of cheers went before, around and behind them as they passed. Words, flags and wreaths of welcome lined the streets. Every spot, from roof to curbstone, and

even to the outer edges of the passing regiment, was densely packed. The ladies bloomed out of the buildings wherever a window opening could be found, they poured a grateful tribute of flowers on the regiment; *and very soon the grim muzzle of nearly every musket bore its beautiful bunch of flowers—a touching illustration of the blossoms of Peace, growing out of the very mouths of War.* This distribution was made by a flower brigade of young ladies led by Miss Travis. This brigade was organized by Mr. J. T. Sloan.

"There were to many longing eyes, sad gaps of ghost-like memories in that marching line—the places that were filled before by the 'unreturning brave.' Those who had gone home before on endless furloughs; furloughs sealed in their own brave blood by the mortal hand of Death. Oh, Newburgh, Orange, Sullivan, what of these? What of the orphaned hearts; the widowed; the childless; to whom the pageant of last night brought only grief renewed? What of those still left among us, for whom the peerless tones of the lost one's greetings shall sound on earth no more?

"Many who expected to welcome their brave friends home, learned for the first time of their death; and others were left behind in hospital. Of the original regiment only one hundred and thirty returned. Company C was mostly a Newburgh company—only six of its original members came home. It was first commanded by Captain Cromwell, then Captain Silliman, then Captain Finnegan, and now by Captain Thomas Taft. Its first three captains all fell. Mr. Thomas Foley had three sons in Company C, every one of whom fell in the war."

* * * * * *

"*June* 15.—During yesterday the streets were alive with the members of the 124th, waiting patiently and good-humoredly for their pay. Some unlucky knot of red tape had caught the paymaster by the elbow and kept him from making the needful disbursements. The men conducted themselves peaceably and bore the delay with soldier-like patience, though many of them were kept from home while within a few miles of it, after an absence of years.

"*June* 16.—The paymaster having arrived and extricated himself from the meshes of red tape which enveloped him, commenced paying off the soldiers of the 124th last night. This was a much needed relief to the men, who had been left to wander around since their arrival as they could. They bore the long delay with true soldier-like patience, although one would occasionally break into one of these barriers of polite conversation called a *dam.* A body of civilians would not have waited with the same patience for the pay these soldiers have earned so nobly—in fact to pay them adequately for the services they have rendered the country, will never be in the power of the people."

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* The name of Lewis D. Adams, Co. "F," should have appeared in "Lists of Present for Duty," on pages 96 and 183; that of John R. Banker, in "List of Original Members of Co. 'E,'" page 25; that of George L. Brewster, Co. "K," as Sergeant of Wagon Guard, page 285, and that of Charles W. Bode, in "List of Musicians Present at Gettysburg," opposite page 144.

† Just after the Battle of Fredericksburgh Sergeant J. J. Bailey, Co. "K," and a considerable number of other non-commissioned officers who had been absent sick to exceed thirty days, were reduced to the ranks, in order that the positions they held might be filled by men selected from those present for duty

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* The names of William H. Dawson, Co. "H," Isaac W. Dailey, Co. "E," and Abram C. Forshee, Co. "D," should have appeared in "List of Wounded at Chancellorsville," pages 127, 128; that of Daniel P. Dugan, Co. "D," in "List of Wounded at Battles of the Wilderness," page 301; and that of Jesse W. Foley, Co. "C," in "List of Present for Duty," page 98.

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* The name George C. Godfrey, Co. "E," should have appeared in "Lists of Wounded at Chancellorsville," page 128; that of Archibald Freemen, Co. "E," in "List of Present for Duty [illegible] and that of Sergeant James G. Irwin, Co. "D," in "List of Present for Duty at Chancellorsville," page 97.

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* The name of James Partington, Co. "I," should appear in "Battle Line of Regiment at Gettysburg," opposite page 174; and that of David F. Raymond, Co. "D," in "List of Wounded at Chancellorsville," page 127.

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* The name of John J. Scott, Co. "E," should have appeared in "List of Present for Duty," page 283; and those of John W. Swim, Co. "A," and Wesley Storms, Co. "B," in "Battle Line at Gettysburg," opposite page 174.

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